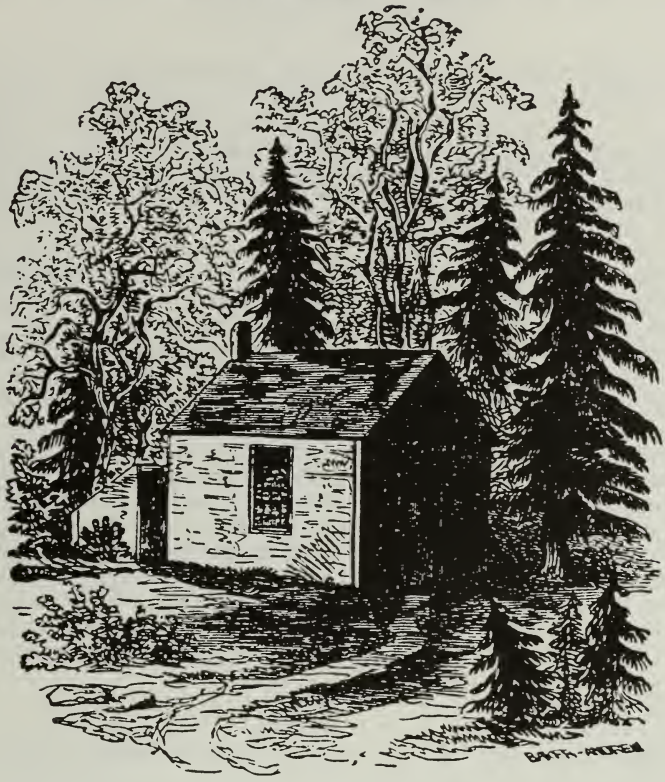
THE CONCORD SAUNTERER



"To live saunter toward the Holyland;
Till one day the sun shall shine more
brightly than ever he has done, shall
perchance shine into our minds and
hearts, and light up our whole lives
with a great awakening light, so warm
and serene and golden as on a
bank-side in Autumn."

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THE CONCORD SAUNTERER

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The Concord Saunterer is published three times a year by the Thoreau Lyceum, the Concord base of the Thoreau Society, an international non-profit organization dedicated to furthering the recognition of Henry D. Thoreau through the consideration of his life, writings, and ideals. The Lyceum houses a permanent collection of memorabilia, changing exhibits, library, lecture room, book shop, and gift shop. A replica of the Walden House has been built behind the Lyceum. Membership in the Thoreau Society is open to the public and includes subscriptions to its two publications, The Concord Saunterer and The Thoreau Society Bulletin, and free admission to the Lyceum for members and guests. Lyceum correspondence and requests for book lists and membership applications should be addressed to Mrs. Thomas W. McGrath, Curator, The Thoreau Lyceum, 156 Belknap Street, Concord, Massachusetts 01742. Copy for The Concord Saunterer should be submitted to the editor, Thomas Blanding, c/o the Lyceum. The editor welcomes correspondence from persons engaged in biographical, historical, textual, or bibliographical research about Thoreau, Concord, and Transcendentalism.

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EDMUND QUINCY SEWALL, JR., HENRY THOREAU'S "PURE UNCOMPROMISING SPIRIT"

by Thomas Blanding

Lately, alas, I knew a gentle boy,
Whose features all were cast in Virtue's mould,
As one she had designed for Beauty's toy,
But after manned him for her own stronghold.

Thoreau, "Sympathy"

In June 1839 Henry Thoreau wrote in his Journal, "I have within the last few days come into contact with a pure uncompromising spirit, that is somewhere wandering in the atmosphere, but settles not positively anywhere." That "pure uncompromising spirit" was Edmund Quincy Sewall, Jr., an eleven year old youth who had come to Concord with his mother to visit his grandmother and aunt, the Wards, boarders in the Thoreau home. Henry was captivated at once by the bright and witty boy, as have been Thoreau's biographers ever since. For this visit begins the story of the one real romance in Thoreau's life; not with Edmund--as some would have it--but with Edmund's sister Ellen.

The next spring Edmund enrolled in the Concord Academy taught by Henry and his brother John. A previously unpublished letter Edmund wrote to his cousin Mary in Spencer, Massachusetts, reveals the pleasant personality that so engaged the Thoreaus (Thoreau Society Archives, typescript of manuscript now lost):

April 5th.

My dear cousin

Aunt tells me that you intend going a long journey and as she has a chance to send tomorrow I thought I would write you. I am going to school here now to a Mr Thoreau who is a very pleasant schoolmaster. Saturdays we do nothing but write composition. Do you write composition at your school?

I guess you will have a very pleasant time and see a great many new things while you are gone. It will seem very queer I suppose to sit down to meals with a great many people in a tavern. When I came up here Father and I took dinner at a tavern in Boston. A good many of the people took cider to drink, but I hope if they offer any to you, you will ask for water.

Do you remember my little brother George? When I heard from home last he was very well and happy. He is big enough to go to the Post Office and to get milk in my place. Tell your mother that the block-tin mug she gave him was still in existence when I came

away and has received no injury except that one end of the handle is broken. I have no doubt that he would send love to you if he were here. When I received a bundle from home lately he wrote me a little letter while Mother held his hand. He said that "Father bought me a hymn book and 'Jonas' Stories' and some oranges and sugar plums and a drum of figs for us all." I suppose you can write letters without your Mother's holding your hand cant you?

I have been out to sail once since I have been here in Mr Thoreau's boat. He has a very good boat which he and his brother made themselves. The river was then quite high and we sailed very fast a part of the way. Perhaps you will sail some in steam boats while you are gone. If so you must be careful not to tumble overboard but keep fast hold of Mothers hand. Goodbye I hope you will have a pleasant time.

Your affectionate cousin

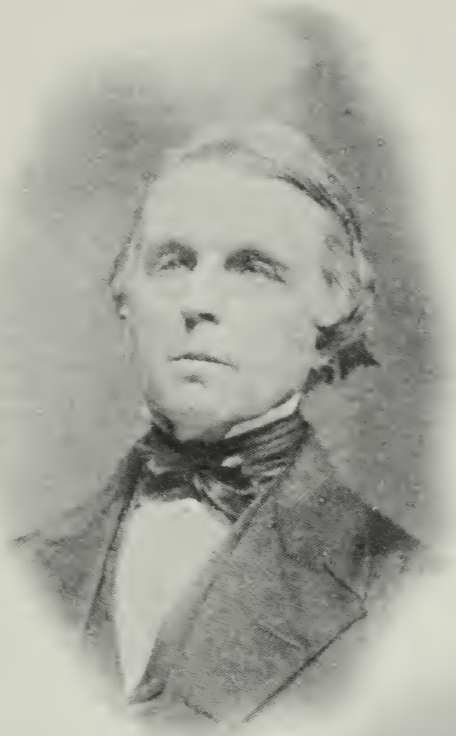
Edmund Q. Sewall

Through the kindness of Edmund's grandson and great-grandson, Theodore Sewall Abbot and Quincy Sewall Abbot, we reproduce photographs in their possession of Edmund (Ned) Sewall and his parents, Caroline Ward Sewall and Edmund Quincy Sewall, Sr. Here at last are the features of Thoreau's "gentle boy."

EDMUND QUINCY SEWALL, JR.

1847 or 1848, wearing the cap he made

(Courtesy of Theodore and Quincy Abbot)



REVEREND EDMUND QUINCY SEWALL AND CAROLINE WARD SEWALL

(Courtesy of Theodore and Quincy Abbot)

HENRY THOREAU AND EMERSON'S "NOBLE YOUTHS"

by Harmon Smith

I.

Emerson was of two minds as he watched Henry Thoreau prepare to move to Staten Island in April 1843. Having "suffered some inconveniency" from having the prickly young man "as a permanent guest at table and fireside,"[1] Emerson was not opposed to Thoreau's moving out. But at the same time Emerson found himself wondering how Thoreau would fare in his new situation. The "Snuggery" where he would live while tutoring Emerson's nephew Willie stood in a sparsely populated region of the island. Wouldn't Thoreau feel isolated without acquaintances with similar interests? By a stroke of good luck, Giles Waldo, a young man Emerson had met that winter while lecturing in Washington, D.C., had recently moved to Brooklyn and now shared there a room in a boarding house with William A. Tappan. Waldo, "a faithful subscriber to the Dial,"[2] had impressed Emerson with the "kindest and gentlest manners."[3] Tappan, whom Emerson had also met during his tour, he considered "tranquil and wise."[4] Such "noble youths,"[5] he concluded, would be ideal companions for Henry Thoreau.

With this in mind Emerson wrote Waldo proposing a meeting. Always cautious when bringing people together, Emerson considered it prudent to prepare Waldo and his friend Tappan for Thoreau's unorthodox appearance and manners. After all, Waldo, like Emerson, was a direct descendant of Deacon Cornelius Waldo who had settled in Massachusetts in 1654,[6] and Tappan was the son of a leading antislavery advocate and successful businessman, Lewis Tappan. Waldo responded to Emerson's comments with verve:

> Henry Thoreau we shall be glad to see.-- he is a wild man of the woods you say,--and we shall take no pains to conceal from him that we are as wild men of the city. I hope we may have some pleasant Sundays together.[7]

There was no need for formality, Waldo insisted; let Thoreau "bring no 'letters of introduction' but only such messages as you may have to send,--and he shall be received & cherished."[8] On Saturday, May 6, as Thoreau readied himself to board the train for Boston to catch the New York boat, Emerson prepared a packet with a letter and some books for Waldo.

Thoreau had heard Emerson describe Waldo and Tappan repeatedly in glowing terms. The letters Emerson had written while on tour had chronicled the progress of his "fiery friendship"[9] with Waldo, whom he called his "Washington Phoenix."[10] After encountering Tappan in New York City Emerson had rhapsodized about the "loney beautiful brooding youth" whose "joyful acquaintance"[11] had made the trip worthwhile. From Henry Thoreau's point of view Emerson's enthusiasm for the pair could not have blossomed at a more unfortunate time. The friction that had arisen between Thoreau and his distinguished friend had been

one of the reasons for Thoreau's decision to leave the Emerson home after living there two years. As Thoreau settled into his new duties on Staten Island, he was in no mood to view these much praised young men indulgently. He would quickly find out whether or not they measured up to Emerson's opinion of them.

A week after his arrival at William Emerson's, Thoreau set off on the ferry to deliver Emerson's packet. From the Battery at the tip of Manhattan Island it was only a short walk to Lewis Tappan's office at the corner of Hanover Street and Exchange Place where Giles Waldo and William Tappan worked. A few years earlier it had been the elder Tappan's idea to establish a firm that would "obtain and record . . . the standing of merchants throughout the country, for the use of those who might sell to them on credit,"[12] and the enterprise had proved successful enough for him to employ a growing number of clerks to collect and interpret the intelligence he sold. Delighted by Thoreau's appearance at the office, Waldo and Tappan led him to an alehouse in the neighborhood. Thoreau did not have the opportunity to observe them closely on this occasion since they could stay away from their desks only a short time. But the next day Waldo travelled to Staten Island to return the visit, and Thoreau had the chance to talk to him uninterruptedly for two hours as they walked through the woods near the William Emerson house.

Like many of the young men and women whose company Emerson enjoyed, Giles Waldo hoped to become a writer. Early in their correspondence Waldo had sent several of his verses, which Emerson informed him he "intended printing"[13] in the Dial. Now even more exciting news reached Waldo in the packet Thoreau had brought from Concord. Not only did Emerson find "acceptable" the "letters and fragments of journal" Waldo had submitted for publication, but sent a "prophetic communication"[14] which encouraged Waldo to believe he could look forward to a writing career.

Since a major objective of Thoreau's coming to Staten Island was to make a place for himself in the New York literary world, he might have been expected to sympathize with Waldo's yearnings. As they walked through the woods, however, it became apparent to Thoreau that a wide gulf stretched between them intellectually. Although Thoreau talked as he might with any member of Emerson's group, to the bewildered Waldo "all the fine things" Thoreau told him "of the signification of words, & letters, & Basque mysticism" were "so new as never to have been dreamed of before." Thoreau, realizing that converse on his own level was impossible with Waldo, told him of this bluntly, as Waldo explained to Emerson in a postscript to the letter he wrote that evening:

> My interview with Thoreau has shown me how desperately ignorant I have been content to remain of books. He found that on this subject, in regard to "this scholar stuff" there could be but little sympathy between us,--at least that he had nothing to learn of me, while I must owe everything to him.[15]

Not long afterward Thoreau spent a few hours with William Tappan and grilled him zealously to measure the depth of his learning. Later Tappan confessed to Emerson that Thoreau had "left many questions sticking in my shield which I was obliged to interpose, for I had not learned to answer a question without telling a lie."[16]

Despite Thoreau's heavy-handed treatment of Waldo and Tappan, displeasure was directed essentially not at them but at Emerson for having exaggerated their abilities. Thoreau liked the pair, he admitted. In fact, there was "a certain youthfulness and generosity" about them that he found "very attractive." But when he wrote Emerson Thoreau could not resist mentioning the disappointment he had felt in meeting them. "They are so much better than the great herd," he conceded, "and yet the heavens are not shivered into diamonds over their heads." Furthermore, Thoreau implied, to have praised them equally had been a mistake. Tappan's "more reserved and solitary thought commands respect,"[17] he asserted. But there was something about Waldo that made Thoreau hesitate. Perhaps he already sensed the weaknesses in Waldo's character that would later become apparent.

Emerson's enthusiasm for Waldo was in no way dampened by Thoreau's cautiously implied reservations. For some time Emerson had hoped that Waldo would visit him in Concord. At first the young man found a trip of this length impossible due to his financial situation. "I have so hedged up my paths in life with embarrassment of debt," he wrote, "that I am now constrained for a time to give up the freedom I love."[18] But in July he decided to disregard his personal situation and venture northward. He arrived on July 15, at a time when Emerson was ready for company. His wife Lidian was vacationing in Plymouth, and he had no pressing affairs to attend to. Before long he discovered that Waldo's presence engrossed him so completely that, as he admitted to Lidian, "the pen does not afflict the paper as steadily as usual."[19]

In his pursuit of Emerson, Giles Waldo had been assiduous indeed. Introduced in Washington, D.C., by a mutual acquaintance, Waldo had immediately told Emerson that "he had wished to see [him] more than any other person in the country."[20] It was at Waldo's suggestion that Emerson retrieved his luggage from Gadsby's Hotel and moved into the boarding house where Waldo was staying. Four days later, when Emerson continued on his lecture tour, Waldo wrote him the first of many flattering letters:

> --how full of joy I am at having seen you--and how more than full, at having been able to know you so well. You have already done me much good--more than you can think.[21]

At first Emerson attempted to hold Waldo at "arms length," sending him "warnings" that his "company was made up."[22] But Waldo's unflagging enthusiasm for the older man disarmed him. Before long Waldo could write: "You have received me! It is more blessed than I thought."[23]

During the "calm sunny hours"[24] Emerson and Waldo spent together in Concord Emerson was once again struck by his young friend's "fine, gentle spirit" and "great intelligence."[25] But his enthusiasm for Waldo's poetry was already cooling and he decided not to include any of it in the July issue of the Dial. The manner of Thoreau's criticism of Waldo undoubtedly had irritated Emerson, but he had by now come to see the

justice of Thoreau's remarks. If Waldo really intended to be a writer, he would have to "learn English," Emerson advised him, "namely, by reading a multitude of books."[26] However, no hint of this shift in attitude appeared in the letter Emerson sent to Thoreau by Waldo when he returned to New York. Instead Emerson snapped, "Giles Waldo has established himself with me by his good sense. I fancy from your notices that he is more than you have seen. I think that neither he nor W. A. T[appan] will be exhausted in one interview."[27]

It was not entirely Thoreau's fault that "for some weeks" the three had "strangely dodged one another."[28] Waldo was forced to cancel a meeting on June 2, and soon went to his family home in Scotland, Connecticut, to attend his father during his fatal illness. Tappan, for his part, was a shy, elusive figure, difficult to know. Nevertheless, Thoreau, to whom Emerson's good will was important, could not ignore his displeasure, and immediately took steps to improve the situation. Two weeks later Thoreau informed his Concord friend that he had "spent some pleasant hours with W[aldo] and T[appan] at their . . . intelligence office."[29]

II.

Waldo and Tappan were the only contemporaries with whom Thoreau associated regularly during his stay on Staten Island. Later, Thoreau made it clear that he had felt somewhat thwarted in his attempts to "get at"[30] Tappan. But Waldo was eager for Thoreau's company. Waldo, after returning from Concord, had left the room in Brooklyn he shared with Tappan and "taken a parlor in the very nicest part of Broadway nearly opposite the city hotel." Writing to Emerson, Waldo insisted that he was "comfortably solitary"[31] there, but only two days earlier he had complained to a friend in Washington, D.C., of the "freezing loneliness in which I dwell."[32] Behind Waldo's easy social manner lay a confused young man "filled with sad and wild noises from which I do not see how to escape."[33] His brief visit to Massachusetts had further deepened his discontent by exposing him to a society he found enormously attractive. Emerson had introduced him to Ellery Channing with whom Waldo sensed a "brotherhood of souls" and to Hawthorne whose presence made Concord seem "a more precious place."[34] But any hope that "writing a good deal,"[35] as he was now doing, would earn him a niche in that society lay in the distant future. For now, Thoreau was his only tangible link with Emerson's world.

The convenient location of Waldo's new room in lower Manhattan made it an attractive place for Thoreau to visit when he came to New York. He was sure of a pleased welcome when he appeared unexpectedly, as he did on Saturday afternoon, August 19, to tell Waldo that "there was an opportunity to send to Concord." During their conversation Thoreau confided that he was "making efforts to secure himself an opportunity to go a-peddling for some bookseller here."[36] Unable as yet to supplement his income as a tutor by writing for the journals published in New York, Thoreau had decided to try this expedient to earn additional money. On Monday, as Thoreau trudged across Manhattan attempting unsuccessfully to sell subscriptions to The American Agriculturist, the importance of having a friend in the city was

underscored dramatically. A tremendous rain suddenly swept over the island, making the streets impassable. Waldo gladly sheltered Thoreau in his room until "The Great Storm," as the New-York Daily Tribune described it, passed. According to that newspaper,

> It is not too much to say that so great a quantity [of rain] never fell in this city in any previous twelve hours during the memory of the present generation. An immense amount of damage was done by the overflowing of sidewalks, flooding of cellars and basements, washing in of yards, sidewalks, etc.[37]

Emerging from Waldo's boarding house the next day to survey the calamity, Thoreau decided to return to Staten Island. Peddling magazine subscriptions, he had learned, was not the solution to his problem.

That summer was difficult for all three young men. The preceding winter, while Waldo was teaching in Washington, D.C., he wrote Emerson, "This business of school-keeping, I abhor, as it is here and elsewhere managed, and I am solely occupied in it to gain my bread." From a distance, Tappan's work in the Mercantile Agency had looked attractive to Waldo; Tappan at least appeared to be "doing something." But now Waldo, with several months of experience in New York, was just as dissatisfied as ever. Tappan, for his part, felt trapped in his father's office and swore he would be "caged no longer."[38] For some time the pair had been flirting with the idea of studying Italian and now Tappan threatened to run off "to Italy by the first conveyance."[39] Waldo, who had apparently borrowed money from Emerson while visiting in Concord, was still too deeply in debt to consider the venture. Instead, he moved into an Italian boarding house where he hoped to find the surroundings more congenial.

Thoreau differed from Waldo and Tappan in that, while they seemed unable to decide what direction their lives should take, he had a clear vision of how life should be lived. True, he had come to Staten Island to attempt to make a career for himself, as Emerson said, by writing "valuable papers" on "many subjects,"[40] but that was an expedient forced on Thoreau by circumstances. He had already declared that he wanted to "live away by the pond";[41] the rewards offered by a materialistic society held no attraction. One day, while visiting a little church on Thames Street a few blocks from the Mercantile Agency, Thoreau "held forth" to Waldo and Tappan in the quiet sanctuary "after a creed somewhat heterodox."[42] His vision of what life could be, freed from "commerce, & degrading trades,"[43] seems to have had a powerful effect on them. In the coming weeks their thoughts were taken up with exciting new possibilities.

In mid-September Waldo and Tappan suddenly left New York together to try an experiment. They had decided to see if they could "avoid the mere mercenary way of living" that they were "obliged to use in the city."[44] They traveled to the forests of Hamilton County, New York, where they "lived like Indians for a few weeks" and procured food by hunting deer. Relating their experience afterward to Emerson, Waldo confided, "I cannot yet tell what good will result, but we were satisfied with that way of living and that is perhaps enough."[45] During the long, tedious days at the Mercantile Agency Waldo often recalled

those wilderness weeks. He had produced "a great heap of manuscripts"[46] since visiting Concord. If he could "leave all & follow the spirit into the wilderness,"[47] Waldo reasoned, his dream of a writing career might become a reality.

By now Thoreau was thoroughly convinced that he could not find a market for his writing in New York. Although he continued to visit the city regularly, benefiting from reader's privileges at two private libraries, he did not see Waldo and Tappan as often as he had during the late summer. After Tappan returned from Hamilton Forest, he went to Hopkinton Springs resort to spend some time with his mother, then journeyed to Concord to visit Emerson, who had just printed one of Tappan's poems in the October Dial. Meanwhile, Waldo had moved again, this time to a tavern in Brooklyn overlooking a "Military Garden." The pressures that made life difficult for him had grown worse. He was "tossed hither and thither," he complained, by the "struggle and agony"[48] of daily existence.

Soon afterward, Thoreau's sojourn on Staten Island ended abruptly. He returned to Concord for Thanksgiving and decided there to give up tutoring and devote his energies to the family pencil-making business. Not having found the William Emersons to be his "kith and kin,"[49] he had felt lonely and isolated in their home. Emerson's thoughtfulness in arranging for "the solitary youth"[50] to meet Waldo and Tappan had provided Thoreau with congenial companions when he particularly needed them. If Thoreau and Emerson had disagreed about the pair at first, it was because the younger man had seen them more clearly. During Thoreau's months away, however, Emerson's view of Waldo and Tappan had changed perceptibly. Not only had he become more aware of the lack of depth in their educations, but his attitude toward them had begun to mirror Thoreau's initial response. In July, after Waldo's visit to Concord, Emerson had admitted to Lidian that, "if in no other way," Waldo appealed because of the "beautiful friendship which subsists between him & Tappan."[51] And, after a similar visit from Tappan, Emerson firmly declared him "a person of great promise."[52]

III.

Although Thoreau had left the New York area for good, the influence of his ideas on Waldo and Tappan remained strong. Convinced by their visit to Hamilton Forest in September that they could successfully live off the land, they moved into a log cabin there shortly before Christmas. While both young men planned a regime of "severe study," Waldo also hoped to "find words to his dream."[53] In the dead of winter the expedient of shooting deer for food did not suffice and they found themselves forced to deplete their small cash reserves to purchase provisions. Their cabin was so cold that "writing without mittens" was almost impossible, and Waldo "wrote but little."[54] Huddling close to the fire, they read Swedenborg, Shakespeare, Milton, Montaigne, Spenser, and Coleridge. Unfortunately, Tappan burned his foot so badly that he had to spend three weeks in a nearby settlement to recover, and upon his return Waldo suffered a bad case of frostbite on his feet. Money was running out and they saw that they would soon have to leave the forest. Waldo left first. He did not return to New York with Tappan but went home to Connecticut.

It was at this point that weaknesses in Waldo's character began to reveal themselves--perhaps the same flaws Thoreau had detected and could not endorse. Waldo attempted to make the journey home on foot, but walking became so painful that he could not get far. From Canaan Four Corners he sent a pitiful letter to Emerson, telling him that "bread fails me without the pledging of my knapsack & my person, for the assurance of my supplying to my landlord of the quid pro quo--" Therefore, he wrote, "I beg you to send me if you can do so as well as not five dollars."[55] Emerson promptly posted more than the young man had asked for. Waldo was able to return "in the second class cars to Worcester,"[56] thence to his mother's house in Scotland, Connecticut. Before long, he was back in New York, unemployed. He wrote Emerson disconsolately, "One of the chief pleasures I have is that of being in debt."[57]

The friendship between Waldo and Tappan, which Emerson had admired so much, could not withstand the strains of Waldo's otiose behavior. Waldo complained to Emerson in December 1844 that Tappan was "tending to vanish into thin air--I do not know that I shall ever see him again."[58] Emerson's relationship with Tappan, however, had been cemented by his visit to Concord; they continued to see each other when Emerson passed through New York on his lecture tours. As time went by, it became increasingly clear that this "most reserved of mortals"[59] possessed reserves of "quiet strength"[60] which gave his friendship a special value.

Meanwhile, Giles Waldo drifted away. The only work he could obtain was Vice Consul at Lahaina in the Sandwich Islands, where he was responsible for dealing with the American whaling fleet. From Lahaina he wrote Emerson on September 8, 1845, that he had given up all hope of becoming a writer. He had not forgotten Thoreau's desire to live independently, however, for Waldo offered "to enter into negociations with this government" to procure land for him on the island of Hawaii, which he indicated could be purchased cheaply. Not only was the island beautiful, Waldo declared, but "all the fruits of the tropics"[61] were available year-round for the picking.

Two months later Waldo wrote again with a strange proposition. He had arranged, he told Emerson, for a credit of $250 at James Munroe & Co., and asked Emerson to draw upon this fund to purchase books and prints for him.

> I would also be glad if J. M. & Co. would be willing to pay you the sum of $40 which may be deducted from the gross amount of $250 & the balance to be expended as above.-- From the $40 I could wish you to pay yourself the debt I owe you, & to hand the balance . . . [to] H. D. Thoreau to be used as he may see fit.[62]

There is no record in Emerson's account book that he accepted this proposition, for himself or for Henry Thoreau.[63]

Endnotes

The unpublished letters of Giles Waldo, William A. Tappan, and Ellery Channing quoted in this article are in the Houghton Library, Harvard University. I am grateful to the Harvard University Library and the Ralph Waldo Emerson Memorial Association for permission to publish these letters.

1. Nathaniel Hawthorne, The American Notebooks, ed. Randall Stewart (New Haven, 1932), p. 371.
2. Ralph L. Rusk, ed., The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson (New York, 1939), III, p. 127.
3. Rusk, Letters, III, p. 130.
4. Rusk, Letters, III, p. 147.
5. Rusk, Letters, III, p. 143.
6. Joseph D. Hall, The Genealogy and Biography of the Waldo's of America, from 1650 to 1883 (Danielsonville, Conn., 1883), pp. 94, 122.
7. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, April 27, 1842. Internal evidence makes it clear that this letter was actually written in 1843.
8. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, April 18, 23, 1843.
9. Rusk, Letters, III, p. 128.
10. Rusk, Letters, III, p. 137.
11. Rusk, Letters, III, p. 149.
12. Lewis Tappan, The Life of Arthur Tappan (New York, 1870), p. 345.
13. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, April 7, 1843.
14. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, May 14, 15, 1843.
15. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, May 14, 15, 1843.
16. William A. Tappan to R. W. Emerson, December 12, 1844.
17. Walter Harding and Carl Bode, eds., The Correspondence of Henry David Thoreau (New York, 1958), p. 111.
18. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, April 18, 23, 1843.
19. Rusk, Letters, III, p. 187.
20. Rusk, Letters, III, p. 130.
21. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, January 16, 1843.
22. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, January 23, 1843.
23. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, January 25, 1843.
24. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, August 19, 1843.
25. Rusk, Letters, III, p. 185.
26. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, August 19, 1843.
27. Harding, Correspondence, p. 126.
28. Harding, Correspondence, p. 128.
29. Harding, Correspondence, p. 133.
30. William Ellery Channing to R. W. Emerson, March 10, 1845.
31. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, August 19, 1843.
32. Giles Waldo to Rev. Stephen Greenleaf Bulfinch, August 16, 1843.
33. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, February 21, 1843.
34. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, August 19, 1843.
35. Giles Waldo to Rev. Stephen Greenleaf, Bulfinch, August 16, 1843.
36. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, August 19, 1843.
37. New-York Daily Tribune, vol. III, no. 116 (August 23, 1843), 2.
38. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, March 14, 1843.
39. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, August 19, 1843.

40. Ralph Barton Perry, The Thought and Character of William James (Boston, 1935), I, p. 45.
41. The Journal of Henry D. Thoreau, ed. Bradford Torrey and Francis H. Allen (Boston, 1906), I, p. 288.
42. William A. Tappan to R. W. Emerson, December 12, 1844.
43. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, February 25, 1844.
44. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, February 12, 1844.
45. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, September 26, 1843.
46. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, August 19, 1843.
47. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, September 26, 1843.
48. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, September 26, 1843.
49. Harding, Correspondence, p. 114.
50. Perry, The Thought and Character of William James, I, p. 49.
51. Rusk, Letters, III, p. 185.
52. Rusk, Letters, III, p. 211.
53. Rusk, Letters, III, p. 231.
54. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, February 25, 1844.
55. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, February 12, 1844.
56. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, February 25, 1844.
57. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, December 27, 1844.
58. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, December 27, 1844.
59. Rusk, Letters, III, p. 211.
60. Gay Wilson Allen, Waldo Emerson (New York, 1981), p. 450.
61. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, September 8, 1845.
63. Giles Waldo to R. W. Emerson, November 13, 1845.
63. R. W. Emerson's manuscript account book, "1845-1848," Houghton Library, Harvard University.

REMINISCENCES OF CONCORD

by Susan Frances Loring

The following girlhood reminiscences of Concord in the mid-nineteenth century were written by Susan Frances Loring (1842-1912), the youngest daughter of David and Susanna Loring. Susan's father came to Concord in 1819 and established in Factory Village the manufacture of lead pipe and sheet lead. In the spring of 1857 the Lorings moved to Framingham, Massachusetts, and two years later to Winona, Minnesota. Susan describes Concord Center (the Milldam) as Thoreau and Emerson would have known it at mid-century. She recalls, among other things, Frederica Bremer's visit to America in 1849, Moncure Daniel Conway's berry-picking party with the Emersons, Mary Moody Emerson's shroud, and Emerson's desire to be a fairy(!). We are indebted to Mrs. Marcia E. Moss, Curator of the Concord Library, for providing us with a verbatim transcription of the manuscript, and to the Concord Free Public Library for permission to publish it here. (TB)

Will you walk with me through the old town of Concord and try to see it as it was in my childhood? Starting at what is now Walden Street (we had no names to the streets when I was a girl nor were there as many streets as there are now.) It was "the main street", the "back street" (now Sudbury Road), "up to the Ripleys" (Old Manse), "down by Dr. Bartlett's", "the old turnpike", "Lincoln Road" by the Orthodox Church, were all the streets there were in the center of town. Oh yes, one more "the road to Bedford". Where "Friend's Block" now stands was the old Hastings house, a large brick house standing back from both streets having a pleasant yard which gave the Bates house (behind it on Main Street) a much pleasanter outlook than it has now as the front yards had not then been taken away to widen the street [1873]. On the right hand side of the street was only the old Bank (now Mr. Tuttle's tailor shop with offices downstairs) then Dr. Barrett's (the Old Block)house. Returning to the left side of the street, we find Mr. Stewart, the tailor, occupying the house now owned by his son. Mr. Collier whose jewelry store was where Towle and Kent are now (Anderson's Market) lived next to Stewart. Capt. Barzillai Hudson lived in Mr. Barker's house. There was no Judge Brooks house then, but standing close to the street and side walk was Mr. Phineas How's grocery store, then his house. Squire Hoar's law office next to Dr. Edward's, the dentist's office.

In the point now occupied by the Library, stood Squire Brooks' house which was moved to Hubbard Street, and is now owned by Mrs. George How. Next to the grave yard on the right, and on the land where Col. Barrett's house now is, was the old Bigelow Tavern, the house standing quite close to the grave yard fence, the stables stood farther back. Many may not know that originally the road went in between the Bank and Dr. Barrett's, around the grave yard, and then up Sudbury Road which accounts for the grave stones being set as they are. Judge Hoar once told me the story of Mr. Holbrook having the care of the grave yard, and being a man who almost invariably used the wrong word, accosted his father (Squire Hoar) who was passing one day when Mr. Holbrook was engaged in cleaning up the yard with "Don't you think, Squire, it would be a good plan to take these stones up and put them down alphabetically?" (meaning diagonally) Squire Hoar replied, "Perhaps the people underneath might object." Well, to continue our walk, we find the same Mr. Holbrook's Hotel next to the burying ground. It was a small sort of family hotel. The house now occupied by Miss Jenney Barrett, and, I believe, the next one too are both made out of it. Then Mr. Moses Pritchard's house looking as it did until Mrs. Bradford altered it last year with its square roof and short ell. Next to Squire Brooks' was Mr. Myrick's little shop where he made dainty little pocketbooks and had a supply of lovely colored papers which were the delight of our childish hearts for May baskets and paper doll dresses. Next was the Benjamin's (in which Richard Wood and Dr. Chamberlain now live). Col. Whiting's house and carriage factory was next West. He also owned the Academy School building then facing on Academy Lane standing across what is now Middle Street, for in those days there was no Middle Street, but free open land where the children had a fine time playing. How well I remember the old school house as it

was when Miss Jane Whiting taught in the morning and Miss Anne afternoons; then came Miss Elizabeth Pritchard who taught mornings and Miss Amelia afternoons. The desk stood high up and was high, I think there were three or four steps on either side of it. The middle of the room was an open space with only one long settee across it facing the desk. It was called the "recitation seat". The floor slanted up on each side and on that inclined plane the desks were placed in rows. [Sketch] There was a belfry with a bell pulled by a rope.

Opposite where the Munroe cottage is was a tiny building occupied by an elderly couple whom we called Uncle and Auntie Farmer. I seem to remember but little about him. She was, I imagine, rather foolish and not quite in her right mind, but harmless and we liked to go over and talk with her. Such good time and merry as we had in the old Academy building. Miss Mary Munroe's house has been enlarged. Where Mr. Quincy Browne now lives Mr. Belknap, a railroad promoter lived first in my recollection, then Mr. Wheildon bought it. Across Belknap Street, my father owned the land which he gave to Mr. Frost to build his house on (now Mrs. Charles Walcott's). Mrs. Richardson (now Dr. Brailey's) for her house, Mrs. Thoreau (now Mrs. Fred Pratt's) for hers. Then came the little district school house on the corner.

* * *

Dr. Ripley was settled over "First Parish" (Unitarian) over sixty years. I never saw, but have heard many anecdotes of him. He was fully as much an Autocrat as most ministers of his day. One story was that on a very cold Sunday, and the meeting house in those days not heated, he found when he had finished all the service preceeding the sermon that he had left his sermon at home. He stood up in the pulpit and in grave tones said "Phineas come down." Which he repeated three times, it being custom in those days to repeat the text three times. The congregation naturally supposed it to be the text, but the "tithing" man thinking it was probably his boy Phineas who sat in the gallery he wanted--told him he had better come down which he did, and walked up to the pulpit. The old Dr. told him he had left his sermon on his study table and he wished him to go and get it. As the Manse was over [blank] from the church, it must have been a serious matter to both minister and people to wait in that cold meeting house until Phineas got back and through a not short sermon. But woe unto the man, or woman who dared to have gone out.

* * *

Although I never saw Dr. Ripley, I well remember his daughter in-law Mrs. Sarah Ripley. I think she has one of the most beautiful faces for an old lady I ever saw, and her hair was like silver--a frail delicate looking woman. She is the one whom Frederica Bremer speaks of in her "Homes in the New World" as shelling peas, hearing a Greek lesson, and rocking her grandson's cradle, the latter being my own nephew[.] *[Cousin David Loring, who lived as many years in Portland, Oregon, your Grandmother's and my first cousin F.L.W.] A

self taught woman but whom even the President and professors of Harvard College were glad to go to for information and help. Speaking of Miss Bremer, I remember when a tiny girl she was staying at Mr. Emerson's and Mrs. Emerson's giving a children's party for her and her holding me in her arms. She was a plump little woman with most beautiful hands. Those who have read her books will perhaps remember that most of--if not all her heroines had beautiful hands.

* * *

I well remember the first time I saw Miss Mary Moody Emerson --(or "Aunt Mary" as those who knew her called her). She stood up by the register up near the pulpit in the "Old First Parish Meeting House". She was hardly taller than a girl of twelve--and was dressed in a white woolen "shroud". I have heard Dr. Bartlett say that to his certain knowledge she wore out nine shrouds--she had them in linen and woolen because as she said "If she died in the summer she wished to lie cool, and if she died in the winter, she wished to lie warm" and then she wore them for dresses. Her bonnet was a black cottage bonnet rather smaller about the face than at the crown. One of the old-fashioned--even then--black lace veils instead of hanging was drawn up at the side and fastened in a great bunch or knob on the top of the bonnet. One heard many amusing anecdotes about her and the most amusing was told me by the two principal actors--besides herself. One of [the] ladies calling upon her one afternoon found her getting ready to "go out to tea". Whereupon Miss Mary asked her to do several things to help her--among others she asked her to sweep up the hearth and leave it in good order--there being an open fire place in the room. After all was done and they had locked the door, she turned to her friend and said, "Mrs. [blank] what did you do with the brush after you swept up the hearth?" I put it on the corner of the mantle. Miss Mary exclaimed, "My house will be burned down." Upon which Mrs. [blank] said "I will go back and move it". Miss Mary emphatically said "No, but never attempt to do what you do not know how to do." The same conversation was gone over three times on the street before she reached the friends where she was to take tea. I afterwards heard the rest of the story from that lady. It seems Mr. Emerson was somewhat late in getting there and supper was delayed for him, but no sooner did he appear than his Aunt handed him the key to her room, and telling him what had taken place requested him to go and remove the brush from the hearth lest the house be burned down. Which he did and supper was still longer delayed. When however they were seated at the table, Mrs. [blank] told me, I said Aunt Mary will you have tea, coffee, or chocolate? No was the reply. I had always called her Aunt Mary, but thinking perhaps she did not like my doing so when many were present, I said, "Miss Mary will you have tea, coffee or chocolate?" "All[.]" "Will you have them in separate cups or all together?" "All together[.]" So I poured a little of each into a cup and she drank it.

* * *

I do not remember the time when I did not know Mr. and Mrs. Emerson. As his youngest daughter was my dearest and most intimate friend--although we lived about half a mile apart--Mr. Emerson took my sister and myself into the woods and fields with his children and talked to us about the birds, and flowers and trees--and many a time when we have stayed over late at his house has he gone home with us walking between and holding us each by the hand. Always the best of listeners he led us in our childish prattle. Both he and Mrs. E. delighted in having the children have tableaux and theatrical entertainments at their house, our older sisters superintending them[.] I remember we had been acting a children's version of "Beauty and the Beast" in which I had taken the part of "Fairy Silver Star" and as I was very small for my age Mr. Emerson was in great glee over it. Walking home with my sister and me when it was over, he had a great deal to say about it, and many questions to ask as to how it felt to be a fairy, then suddenly said "Sue Fan I want to be a fairy too, and you tell your father so, and that if he will be one and wear a low necked and short-sleeved red flannel dress, I will wear a low necked and short-sleeved yellow dress."

On one occasion he took us blue berrying in his "hay rigging" he sitting up high on a board laid across the "rigging" and driving, we sitting in the straw on the bottom. Mr. Henry D. Thoreau and his sister Miss Sophia Thoreau, Mr. D. Conway and Mr. Channing (who married Ellen Fuller a sister of Margaret Fuller) drove in a carryall. Mr. Conway who had always enjoyed the company of we (us) small children as often teasing as petting us took the former plan that afternoon and did torment Edith and myself to his hearts content making us spill our berries almost as soon as we picked, until we were in dispair. And when as we were getting into the "hay rigging", he jumped in saying, "I'm not going back in the carriage, I am coming with you", our indignation was at its height, and in most piteous tones, we begged Mr. Emerson not to let him. Immediately Mr. Emerson exclaimed, "Pinch him, girls, pinch him, and if he does not get out, I will horse whip him". At the same time flourishing the horse whip in the most threatening manner much to our delight while we actually flew at Mr. Conway and did our best to pinch him until he left, and I think he called me "the little girl that pinched" for many years. Years after when I was living in Winona, Minnesota, Mr. Emerson came there to lecture then going on to St. Paul. The day he came was terribly cold, and as--like most people in those days--we had to move our cooking stove in from the summer kitchen to the dining room in the winter--we were obliged to do so that day before he came. And I shall never forget his genuine delight as he seated himself at the table with his back to it. "Sue Fan this takes me back to my boyhood when I sat with my back to the kitchen stove in my mother's kitchen--it is delightful!" and then he began to tell of his boyhood. I began to think he would never pay any attention to the other men, he seemed so glad to see my father and me, and I think that cooking stove gave him more genuine enjoyment than he would have felt had he been seated in the most luxurious apartment. At that time one had to travel in winter by stage from LaCrosse to Winona, but from Winona to St. Paul by railroad, and it was a walk of some rods from the cars to the stage. He had told us

the day he would pass through Winona on his return from St. Paul and had promised to take a little package to his daughter for me. So I went down to meet him, gave him the package and say Good bye. The train was a little late so holding out his hand, he said "take my hand and we'll run for the stage, and talk as we go. I only wish you would let me take you all the way to Concord." So hand in hand we did run and with a hearty shake, he said "Good bye little Sue Fan"[.] When he heard I was going back to make a visit, he remembered how I had always liked Porter apples and saved some for me but, alas, only three were sound and edible when I reached my sisters[;] when I almost immediately on my arrival ran over to "the Emersons" he came out of his study to give me a cordial welcome and then brought me the apples saying he tried his best to keep more for me.

The last time I ever shook hands with him, I was walking down School Street from Tremont to Washington (in Boston) and he stood in front of the Parker house talking with a gentleman. The moment he saw me he stepped forward and with hand extended waited until I reached him, and shaking hands he gave me one of his own beautiful smiles.

MORE ON THOREAU'S A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS AND MARGARET FULLER'S "GOOD WEEK"

by Linck C. Johnson

In a recent article ("Thoreau's A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers and Margaret Fuller's 'Good Week'," The Concord Saunterer, vol. 17, no. 1 [March 1984], 6-9), Thomas Blanding sheds new and illuminating light on the relationship between Thoreau's first book and a cryptic reference in the postscript to a letter Margaret Fuller wrote Thoreau on October 18, 1841:

> The pencilled paper Mr E[merson]. put into my hands. I have taken the liberty to copy it You expressed one day my own opinion that the moment such a crisis is passed we may speak of it. There is no need of artificial delicacy, of secrecy, it keeps its own secret; it cannot be made false. Thus you will not be sorry that I have seen the paper. Will you not send me some other records of the good week.[1]

Following in a long line of biographers, editors, and critics, whose comments Blanding quotes and summarizes, in my Historical Introduction to the Princeton Edition of A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers I suggested a connection between Fuller's "good week" and Thoreau's first book, a connection reaffirmed in Robert Hudspeth's gloss of the postscript in The Letters of Margaret Fuller.[2] In challenging the long-standing assumption that Fuller was alluding to A Week, which was not published until 1849, Blanding calls our attention to the immediate foreground of her letter. As he points out,

Fuller had visited Concord as a guest of the Emersons only a short time earlier, between October 2 and October 8 or 9, 1841, when Thoreau had been living there for six months. That is no doubt when Emerson placed in Fuller's hands Thoreau's "pencilled paper," which Blanding plausibly argues contained records of her week at the Emersons, not records of the trip depicted in A Week.

Blanding cites other reasons for doubting the connection between Fuller's "good week" and A Week. First, the trip Henry and his brother John made to the White Mountains in 1839 took two weeks, and Thoreau did not compress the narrative into a single week for some years. Second, during 1840 and 1841 Thoreau planned a lecture or an essay about the trip, not a book. (When I observed in the Historical Introduction to A Week that Fuller appeared to be making a direct reference to Thoreau's "nascent book," I chose an unfortunate phrase, since I meant that the projected essay was the germ out of which the book would later grow, not that Thoreau then conceived of it as a book, which he did not do until after John's death in January 1842.) Third, Thoreau did not actually begin to draft A Week until 1845. Finally, a fact that Blanding does not mention also supports his case: when Thoreau wrote the first and second drafts of the book, his working title was apparently "An Excursion on Concord and Merrimack Rivers," the title Emerson used in letters written in 1846 and early 1847. Emerson first referred to it as "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers" in a letter to William Henry Furness on August 6, 1847, nearly six years after Fuller's reference to "the good week."[3]

Nonetheless, I still believe it is possible that Fuller was alluding to Thoreau's projected account of the voyage depicted in A Week, though not, of course, to the book itself. Thoreau placed "Merrimack & Musketaquid" at the top of a list of essay topics drawn up in the fall of 1841, so the project was obviously on his mind when Fuller visited the Emersons in October. Indeed, by expressing interest in a piece of Thoreau's prose in her postscript, Fuller may have sought to take some of the sting out of the letter itself, which contained a severe critique of Thoreau's poem, "With frontier strength ye stand your ground." Moreover, although the brothers' trip to the White Mountains took two weeks, Fuller may not have known that. In any case, the title "Merrimack & Musketaquid" suggests that Thoreau had by then already decided to limit his account to their river excursion, which took eight days, passing over the time he and John had spent touring the White Mountains. Eight days do not, of course, a week make; on the other hand, if she left the Emersons on October 8, Fuller had spent only six days there, so her "good week" would not fit that case either. But there is, in fact, little reason to believe Fuller meant exactly seven days. Common practice illustrates what the Oxford English Dictionary indicates, that the word week is frequently used "vaguely for an indefinite time, as in a week or two, implying a moderate space of time."

A letter written by Emerson, who passed on Thoreau's pencilled paper to Margaret Fuller, hints at the connotations the phrase "good week" may have had for all three of them. In July 1846 Charles King Newcomb wrote Emerson asking advice about a trip he intended to take to the White Mountains. In his reply, Emerson briefly outlined a tour much like the one he and his second cousin George Bradford had

commenced on August 23, 1839, eight days before Henry and John Thoreau embarked from Concord. "George Bradford confirms my memory in all these particulars," Emerson wrote Newcomb, "and sends you his love & congratulations on the good week before you." In using the phrase "good week," Emerson probably did not mean a cycle of exactly seven days (his own trip with George Bradford had taken eleven); instead, he, like Margaret Fuller before him, evidently meant an unspecified period of recreation, or, given the Biblical overtones of the phrase, of the re-creation of mind and spirit. An account of one such "good week" was very much on Emerson's mind, for, as he told Newcomb, a few days earlier Thoreau had read to him portions of an "'Excursion on Concord & Merrimack rivers,' a seven days' voyage in as many chapters, pastoral as Isaak Walton, spicy as flagroot, broad & deep as Menu."[4]

If what Margaret Fuller had described as the "records of the good week" were some of Thoreau's early jottings about the voyage, that connection would offer a possible explanation of another puzzling reference in the postscript to her 1841 letter. The "pencilled paper" Emerson had placed in her hands obviously concerned some crisis in Thoreau's life, one that had passed by October 1841. It is, of course, impossible to identify that "crisis" with any certainty, but it may have been a crucial turning point in the relationship between Henry and his brother John. A few weeks before their 1839 trip, both had fallen in love with Ellen Sewell, who stayed with their family during a two-week visit to Concord.[5] Immediately after the brothers' return from the White Mountains, John visited Ellen at her home in Scituate. The success of that visit accounts for the mournful note in many of Thoreau's Journal entries on love and friendship that fall. But he joined John in a visit to Scituate during Christmas vacation, and Thoreau saw more of her in June 1840, when Ellen again visited Concord. In fact, his recollections of the 1839 voyage were informed by the more immediate impressions of boating with Ellen on Concord River. In a Journal entry later revised for A Week, for example, Thoreau wrote on June 19, 1840: "The other day I rowed in my boat a free--even lovely young lady--and as I plied the oars she sat in the stern--and there was nothing but she between me and the sky."[6]

But the idyll did not last. In July John again visited Scituate where he proposed to Ellen, who first accepted but swiftly changed her mind. "I heard that an engagement was entered into between a certain youth and a maiden," Thoreau later observed in A Week, "and then I heard that it was broken off, but I did not know the reason in either case" (W, p. 293). At the time, however, he was hardly so detached and dispassionate. That fall Thoreau proposed in a letter written to Ellen in early November. On November 9, after consulting her father, Ellen declined his proposal. If he felt guilty about having asked her to marry him after she had already rejected his brother, Thoreau's feelings were probably intensified by John's declining health, which forced them to close their school in the spring of 1841. Soon after that, Thoreau accepted an invitation to live with the Emersons, where six months later Margaret Fuller received from her host the "pencilled paper" with its "records of the good week." If the document concerned the brothers' 1839 voyage,

it may thus have represented Thoreau's effort to reaffirm the bonds of friendship that had been strained by their competition for the love of Ellen Sewell.

Barring the discovery of that "pencilled paper," its nature and contents will remain a tantalizing puzzle. In a lively illustration of a beautiful theory attacked by a gang of unruly facts, Blanding has convincingly demonstrated that its "records of the good week" could not have been a portion of the manuscript of A Week on The Concord and Merrimack Rivers, which Thoreau did not conceive of as a book until 1842 and did not begin to draft until 1845. Instead, Blanding plausibly argues that "the good week" was simply a reference to the pleasant week Fuller had spent at the Emersons earlier in October 1841. With far less simplicity and a good deal more speculation, I have sought to demonstrate that Fuller's words may have been reference to some jottings for a projected essay on the 1839 river excursion, portions of which Thoreau had begun to draft in the Journal as early as June 1840. The projected essay was then called "Memoirs of a Tour--A Chit-chat with Nature," a title Thoreau wisely changed to "Merrimack & Musketaquid," which he placed at the top of a list of essay topics made in the fall of 1841, probably about the time Fuller visited Concord. That title indicates that Thoreau had by then decided to limit the narrative to the eight days the brothers spent on or along the rivers, so Fuller's reference to "the good week" may well have been a reference to the account. Indeed, it is possible that Fuller's resonant phrase (apparently a fairly common one among the Transcendentalists) stuck in the back of Thoreau's mind, perhaps reemerging when he compressed his eight-day excursion into a narrative of seven days, and again when he altered the title of that "Excursion" to A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers, the title that has called so much attention to Fuller's "good week."

Endnotes

1. The Letters of Margaret Fuller, ed. Robert N. Hudspeth, 2 vols. to date (Ithaca, N.Y., 1983-), vol. 2, p. 243.
2. A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers, ed. Carl Hovde et al. (1980), in The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau, ed. Walter Harding et al., 7 vols. to date (Princeton, N.J., 1971-). Hereafter cited as W, by page number.
3. Records of a Lifelong Friendship, 1807-1882, Ralph Waldo Emerson and William Henry Furness, ed. H. H. Furness (Boston, 1910), p. 60. Emerson, who tried to help Thoreau find a publisher for A Week in 1847, wrote Furness asking him to contact publishers in Philadelphia.
4. The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson, ed. Ralph L. Rusk, 6 vols. (New York, 1939), vol. 3, p. 338.
5. For a more detailed account of the brothers' relationship with Ellen Sewall, see Walter Harding, The Days of Henry Thoreau (New York, 1965), pp. 94-104.
6. Journal, Volume 1: 1837-1844, ed. John C. Broderick et al. (1981), p. 132, in The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau. Cf. W, p. 46.

THOREAU'S LOCAL LECTURES IN 1849 AND 1850

by Thomas Blanding

Thoreau, who wrote in Walden that he had traveled a good deal in Concord, could have said that he had lectured a good deal there too. Of several score lectures delivered between 1838 and 1860, he gave more than half in his home town. And though he might answer the call as far away as Portland, Maine, or Perth Amboy, New Jersey, he rarely tendered his talks beyond Massachusetts parlors and lyceums. Thanks to the research of Kenneth Cameron, we know that Thoreau lectured three times in Lincoln, Massachusetts, the next town southeast of Concord.[1] Now, we learn that a Lincoln listener described one of those lectures in his diary, part of the Walden manuscript delivered in January 1849, as well as two "Cape Cod" lectures Thoreau read before the Concord Lyceum a year later.[2]

James Lorin Chapin (1824-1902) was to become one of Lincoln's leading citizens, serving as Selectman sixteen years, Treasurer eight years, and Town Clerk twenty-three years. In 1865 he was elected District Representative. From the 1850s Chapin kept a store and post office in Lincoln Center and became one of the country's longest serving postmasters. But in 1848, when his diary begins, he was a struggling newlywed living and working on the 117 acre farm of his father-in-law, Cyrus Smith, on the Cambridge Turnpike in Lincoln. From there Chapin divided his spare time, as a farmer's time is always spare, between supporting the newly formed Free Soil Party and locating speakers for the Lincoln Lyceum.

From youth Chapin was an enthusiastic supporter of the Lincoln Lyceum, organized in 1830, a year after the Concord Lyceum, for "the improvement of Knowledge, the advance of Popular Education, and the diffusion of useful information throughout the community generally." Every winter, usually from December through March, the Lincoln Lyceum presented weekly or biweekly lectures and debates at the Centre School House. Like most rural lyceums, Lincoln's struggled to fill its series. Though speakers sometimes came from the metropolises or outlands, more often local talent from Weston, Waltham, Lexington, and Lincoln itself supplied the lectern. Nor did Concord, the community out of which Lincoln had incorporated in 1754, neglect its offspring. Indeed, Lincoln often turned to its enterprising parent for support and stimulation. Chapin's diary for March 16, 1849, tells how Concord loomed on the other side of Walden Pond:

> This evening I have been to Concord. . . . There was a meeting there of some fugitive slaves. Concord is a great resort for such people; there are many people there who are active members of the Anti Slavery society and they assist as many as they can from slavery. Besides that there are many who are

> fond of novelties and will go to hear any new thing whether it is proper or not. So they keep up the excitement with one thing or other.

And so to Lincoln came Concord with its novelties. Dr. Josiah Bartlett gave the first lecture there in 1830 on "Temperance" and returned the next year to speak on "Digestion." Albert Nelson lectured on "Demonology" and "Animal Magnetism," Barzillai Frost on "Education" and "self culture," Reverend Daniel Foster on "the perfect man and the perfect woman," and Ralph Waldo Emerson on "Oratory or Eloquence." Lincoln could count on its Concord cousins to keep up the excitement with one thing or other.

Henry Thoreau gave his first lecture before the Lincoln Lyceum, and his first outside Concord, on January 19, 1847. James Chapin was Recording Secretary: "The Lyceum met according to adjournment with the President in the chair and listened to a lecture from Henry Thoreau, of Concord, for which the society voted their thanks." Thoreau's subject was probably the "History of Himself," the same or a similar part of the Walden manuscript he would deliver in two installments at the Concord Lyceum in February.[3] The Lincoln people, then, may have been the first to hear "Henry's account of his housekeeping at Walden Pond" (as Emerson described the Concord lectures), full of "witty wisdom."[4] After the lecture, the "leading disputants" debated the question, "Are the present customs of society in this country calculated to develope the mental and physical powers of its young men?" Chapin took the affirmative; we may be sure that Thoreau's sympathies were with the other side.

Two years later Chapin's opinion on that question was put to the test. On December 4, 1848, he began teaching the winter term in one of Concord's district schools. He boarded weekdays at James Wood's and now found it convenient to attend two lyceum lectures a week, Concord's and Lincoln's. The timing was providential, for Chapin had just been named to a committee of three to procure lecturers for the Lincoln Lyceum. He was counting on his Concord contacts to plump his home town programs.

His second evening in Concord Chapin attended the first lecture in the Concord series. Afterward he wrote in his diary, "another night I come to my lonely couch and scrawl this imperfect record of my doings ere I lay myself down to take my accustomed repose." . . .

> I have been this evening to hear R. W. Emerson lecture of a few of the peculiarities of English life, and the reason as he says, "why England is England." His remarks on the life of a sailor were in accordance with my views. He seems to have formed a more exalted opinion of the nation than I expected from him. His style of delivery was more easy to-night than it is at sometimes and his language was more according to the comprehension of the common people. He is generally complained as being too far beyond the reach of the common people. But as I listened to the words as the[y] fell smoothly from his tongue I could not wish

but I had a mind and manner equal to his, and I would willingly dispense with his peculiar views on morals and religion.

Lincoln's series did not begin so auspiciously. As the first scheduled evening, December 12, approached, Chapin still had not found a lecturer. With but one day to go, he turned in desperation to the Emersonian eccentric with whom he had shared the dais two years before:

> Another pleasant day. Came home in the morning stopping in town to see Mr. Henry D. Thoreau and see if he would go and lecture before the Lyceum at Lincoln to morrow evening. He could not go and gave as a reason ill health. Said he would go at some future time.[5]

The lectern was empty the next evening. Instead the lyceum debated the question, "Which is the greatest evil to society--Lawyers or Doctors?"--with doctors going to the devil.

A week's disappointment became a month's crisis. The Lincoln Lyceum lacked lecturers the next three meetings, and, instead, held debates. By January 2, 1849, the townspeople were so discouraged that few showed up and even the debate was dropped. Meanwhile, the Concord Lyceum flourished with lectures on the "Law of Progress," the "Art of Printing," and "The West."

Chapin did not attend the Concord Lyceum on January 3 for a reason recorded in his diary:

> I calculated to have gone to the Lyceum but heard that the man who was expected could not come and so I did not go. Have spent most of the evening in reading, but feel so drowsy that I think I cannot sit up longer than nine o'clock.

Had Chapin gone he would have heard a lecture on "White Beans & Walden Pond" by a last-minute substitute, Henry Thoreau. It is not recorded if anyone besides Chapin slept through the talk.

Lincoln had its lectures the next four Tuesday evenings, but the spot for February 6 was still empty. Chapin tried again on February 2:

> I came down to Mr. Thoreau's to see if H. D. Thoreau would come and lecture before the Lincoln Lyceum next Tuesday evening. He said if nothing occurred more than he expected he would come.

Something must have occurred, for the speaker on February 6 was Reverend Hill of Waltham. In any case, Chapin did not attend: "I intended to have gone to Lincoln tonight to the Lyceum, but could not get a horse to carry me, and after the labors of the day I do not feel able to walk there."

The rest of February was bleak for the Lincoln Lyceum--no lecturer on the thirteenth, Ephraim Flint, Jr., one of the lecture procurers, on "Astronomy" on the twentieth, no lecture on the twenty-seventh. Finally, on March 6, after almost a three month delay, Henry Thoreau lectured before the Lincoln Lyceum. The meeting minutes read:

> The Lyceum met according to Adjournment and was called to order by the President. They then listened to a lecture from Mr. Henry Thoreau, of Concord, taken from his journal of a life in the woods. There was no discussion after the lecture.

Chapin recorded the occasion more fully in his diary:

> This evening I have been to the Lyceum here in Lincoln and have listened to a curious lecture from Henry D. Thoreau of Concord. Subject, His reflections when hoing beans when he lived alone in the woods near Waldron Pond in Concord. He had a strange mixture of sense and folly[,] of poetry and halting prose, of science and fable, of physics and ethics. He touched on the pond[,] the woods, the rail road, the cars, the church bells, the distant roar of cannon, the sound of martial music, and the conversation of travellers on the highway, and more fully on the morals of hoing beans. I was very much interested with the lecture, perhaps not so much with the logic and beauty of the subject as the novelty of the style.

Thoreau's lecture was apparently the same Chapin had missed in Concord on January 3, parts of what would become the chapters "Sounds," "Solitude," "Visitors," and "The Bean-field" in Walden. Chapin's mixed feelings about the lecture are similar to its (or a similar text's) reception at the Salem Lyceum on February 28. The Salem Observer reported on March 3:

> . . . The diversity of opinion is quite amusing. Some persons are unwilling to speak of his lecture as any better than "tom-foolery and nonsense," while others think they perceived, beneath the outward sense of his remarks, something wise and valuable. It is undoubtedly true that Mr. Thoreau's style is rather too allegorical for a popular audience. He "peoples his solitudes" of the woods too profusely, and gives voices to their "dim aisles" not recognized by the larger part of common ears.
>
> Some parts of this lecture . . . were generally admitted to be excellent. . . .

> We take the purpose of Mr. T's lectures to have been, the elucidation of the poetical view of life--showing how life may be made poetical, the apprehensive imagination clothing all things with divine forms, and gathering from them a divine language.

Lincoln limped through the rest of its lyceum season. In all, of sixteen evenings slated for lectures, only eight were fulfilled.

A year later Chapin heard Thoreau's two lectures on "Cape Cod" before the Concord Lyceum--lectures Emerson said made Concord people laugh till they cried.[6] Chapin wrote of the first on January 23, 1850:

> Have been to Concord this evening and heard a lecture upon Cape Cod from Henry D. Thoreau. His ideas are strange, many of them, yet I think he had been any other than a "native" of Concord he would have been well liked by most of the people. He gave a graphic description of the wreck of the British Brig, St. John which was wrecked at Cohasset last Oct.

After the second lecture a week later, Chapin commented:

> This evening I have been to the Concord Lyceum and heard another lecture upon Cape Cod by Mr. Thoreau. He seems to have a great faculty of saying a great deal about a very small affair,-- rather too much so I think.

Chapin seems undecided whether Thoreau's novelties were "proper or not." But recurrent attendance at Thoreau's lectures and enlistment of his services suggest, if not enthusiasm for his thoughts, at least recognition of his talents. Nor did Chapin's interest in Thoreau wane. By the end of 1851 Thoreau had finished an account of his travels in Canada and was casting about for an audience. He told his Canada story for the first time on December 30, 1851, before the Lincoln Lyceum--and with the blessing of its President, James Lorin Chapin.[7]

Endnotes

1. Kenneth Walter Cameron, ed., The Massachusetts Lyceum During the American Renaissance (Hartford, 1969), pp. 213, 220, 223. All quotations from and references to the records of the Lincoln and Concord Lyceums are from this work, pp. 101-226 passim.
2. James Lorin Chapin, "Private Journal," July 1848 to November 1850, Historical Collection, Lincoln Public Library, Lincoln, Massachusetts. I am grateful to Evelyn Marie Hinde, Curator,

for permission to publish passages from this manuscript, to John C. MacLean, Lincoln Historian, for information about Chapin, to Michael Price, formerly of the Lincoln Library, for bringing the diary to my attention, and to Marilyn Blaisdell for assistance in examining and transcribing its text.

3. Kenneth Cameron, Massachusetts Lyceum, p. 213, favors "the account of what later became Walden" as Thoreau's lecture in Lincoln. "If not," Cameron adds, "then Thoreau probably lectured on the 'Writings and Style of Thomas Carlyle,' which he had delivered in Concord a year earlier and which was then in the press--to appear in February, 1847, in Graham's Magazine." Another possibility is Thoreau's lecture on reformers and conservatives written in 1845-46. The long lecture version of this work, with its added directions for public reading, is unpublished (Houghton Library, bMS Am 278.5, folder A); the text entitled "Reform and the Reformers" in Reform Papers (Princeton, 1973) is an amalgamation of draft pages for A Week and Walden, written when Thoreau tried to salvage parts of his old lecture for those extended works (bMS Am 278.5, folder B).
4. Ralph L. Rusk, ed., The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson (New York, 1939), III, pp. 377-378.
5. Apparently, Thoreau had other dealings with Chapin in December 1848. A list of outgoing payments recorded by Thoreau in his Journal that month (Huntington Library, HM13182) includes, in addition to money paid to his father and outlays for paper, wood sawing, and fish, the amount of twenty-five cents to "Mr. Chapin" for an unspecified purpose.
6. Walter Harding and Carl Bode, eds., The Correspondence of Henry David Thoreau (New York, 1958), p. 255.
7. The date of Thoreau's Canada lecture in Lincoln usually is given as January 6, 1852 (see, for example, Walter Harding, The Days of Henry Thoreau [New York, 1965], p. 286), on the authority of Thoreau's Journal entry for January 7, 1852: "Last evening, walked to Lincoln to lecture in a driving snow-storm" (The Journal of Henry D. Thoreau [Boston, 1906], III, p. 177). The minutes of the Lincoln Lyceum for December 30, 1851, however, read: "Listened to a lecture by Mr. Thoreau, of Concord. Subject: His travels in Canada" (Massachusetts Lyceum, p. 223). Thoreau's Journal entry for January 7 records the fact that he went to a lecture in Lincoln the evening before. The minutes for that evening read: "A lecture was delivered by the Rev. Mr. Woodbury, of Acton. Subject: The character of the Puritans" (Massachusetts Lyceum, p. 223).

THOREAU AND MICHAEL FLANNERY

by Bradley P. Dean

We have known for quite some time now that Thoreau occasionally performed charitable acts to help some of the Irish immigrants of Concord. In his biography of Thoreau, for example, Walter Harding tells us that Thoreau "wrote letters to the 'old country' for the illiterate."[1] And Harding goes on to note:

> When he learned that one [Irishman] was trying to raise money to bring his family across the Atlantic to join him, Thoreau got up a subscription paper and went from door to door asking for contributions and loans. He was shocked to discover that the local bank president and other of the town dignitaries refused to contribute. He was equally shocked to discover that still another Irishman, who rose at 4:30 each morning to milk twenty-eight cows, received only $6.50 a month pay while his employer prospered on his labors.[2]

What we have not known, however, is that Thoreau performed almost all of these charitable acts not for several different Irishmen, but for one Irishman whom Frank B. Sanborn refers to as "the industrious Irishman from Kerry"--Michael Flannery.[3]

Exactly when Michael Flannery left Kerry, a county in southwest Ireland, to begin life anew in America has not been determined. But when he did, he left his wife Ann and their children behind. It is likely, therefore, that his first thought upon arriving on our shores was to find employment so that he could begin amassing the funds that would enable him to send for his family.

The first record of Flannery in America is his presence at the Middlesex County Cattle Show in the fall of 1853. The Cattle Show was held annually in Concord, and on September 5, 1853, twelve men were vying for the premiums in the spading competition. Ten of these twelve were Irishmen, but one of the two Yankees--Enoch Garfield--won the first premium. The second premium of four dollars, however, went to Michael Flannery.[4]

At the time Flannery won the four-dollar premium in the spading competition, he was employed by Abiel H. Wheeler. Apparently feeling that he was entitled to the fruits of Flannery's labor because Flannery was one of his hired men, Wheeler saw fit to claim Flannery's prize-money as his own. It was at this juncture that Henry Thoreau stepped in.

Hearing that Abiel Wheeler had claimed the four-dollar premium won by Flannery, Thoreau drew up and circulated a petition which read:

Concord Oct 12th '53

We, the Undersigned, contribute the following sums, in order to make up to Michael Flannery the sum of four dollars, being the amount of his premium for spading on the 5th ult., which was received and kept by his employer, Abiel H. Wheeler.[5]

Thoreau apparently had spoken with Flannery and found that he needed money to send for his family, for Thoreau also circulated a subscription paper in Flannery's behalf at this time. Emerson and some other neighbors, by signing the paper, pledged to lend money to Flannery, but Thoreau found that some of his neighbors were not as forthcoming as he thought they should be. That same day he wrote in his journal:

> Oct. 12. To-day I have had the experience of borrowing money for a poor Irishman who wishes to get his family to this country. One will never know his neighbors till he has carried a subscription paper among them. Ah! it reveals many and sad facts to stand in this relation to them. To hear the selfish and cowardly excuses some make,--that if they help any they must help the Irishman who lives with them,--and him they are sure never to help! Others, with whom public opinion weighs, will think of it, trusting you will never raise the sum and so they will not be called on again; who give stingily after all. What a satire in the fact that you are much more inclined to call on a certain slighted and so-called crazy woman in moderate circumstances rather than on the president of the bank! But some are generous and save the town from the distinction which threatened it, and some even who do not lend, plainly would if they could.[6]

Sometime after the spading-competition incident, Flannery stopped working for Abiel Wheeler, as well he might, and found a job as a field laborer on Elijah Wood's farm. But this change was not as providential as Flannery may have hoped. He visited Thoreau on December 19, 1853, and the two men discussed Flannery's continuing efforts to get his family from Ireland. They also discussed Flannery's new job. That evening Thoreau wrote about his Irish friend in a letter to his Worcester friend Harrison G. O. Blake:

> An Irishman came to see me to-day, who is endeavoring to get his family out to this New World. He rises at half past four, milks twenty-eight cows (which has swollen the joints of his fingers), and eats his breakfast, without any milk in his tea or coffee, before six; and so on, day after day, for six and a half dollars a month; and thus he keeps his virtue in him, if he does not add to it; and he regards me as a gentleman able to assist him; but if I ever get to be a gentleman, it will be by working after my fashion harder than he does.[7]

Nine days later, on December 28, 1853, Flannery's predicament was still on Thoreau's mind, for he wrote in his journal that day:

> E[lijah]. W[ood], who got the premium on farms this year, keeps twenty-eight cows, which are milked before breakfast, or 6 o'clock, his hired men rising at 4.30 A. M.; but he gives them none of the milk in their coffee.[8]

Exactly one year later, Thoreau used a slightly revised version of this passage in the lecture he delivered before the Nantucket Atheneum. He called this lecture "What Shall It Profit?" and the passage was used as one of several illustrations of the money-grabbing propensities of some farmers. A few months before his death, Thoreau readied a later version of this lecture for publication as "Life without Principle."[9]

Flannery continued to work for Elijah Wood through the winter of 1853-1854, but in late February of 1854 Flannery was finally able to make the arrangement which enabled him to send for his family. The details of this arrangement are suggested in Thoreau's letter to Elijah Wood dated February 26, 1854 (this letter is misdated 1853 in Thoreau's published correspondence):

> Mr Wood,
>
> I mentioned to you that Mr. Flannery had given me an order on you for 3/4 of his wages. I have agreed with him that that arrangement shall not begin to take effect until the first of March 1854.
>
> yrs
> Henry D. Thoreau[10]

Eight days later, on March 6, 1854, Thoreau wrote to Ann Flannery for Michael. This letter is not extant, but two days after it was written, Thoreau wrote in his journal:

> I wrote a letter for an Irishman night before last, sending for his wife in Ireland to come to this country. One sentence he dictated was, "Don't mind the rocking of the vessel, but take care of the children that they be not lost overboard."[11]

It is apparent, then, that Thoreau had lent Flannery enough money to enable him to send for his wife and children, and that Flannery was to repay Thoreau by giving him three-fourths of the wages he was to earn from Elijah Wood. On September 4, 1854, Thoreau was still repaying the debts that Flannery had amassed, for Emerson wrote in his account book on that day:

> Sept. 4 Recd. from Henry Thoreau on a/c of cash loaned to Mr. Flanery [sic] last year 2.50
>
> balance still due . 2.50[12]

It is likely that Emerson and a few others who had signed the subscription paper Thoreau had circulated on October 12, 1853, had lent Flannery a sum of money that was insufficient for his need, and that Thoreau had lent Flannery the difference. There is evidence that Michael worked for Mr. Thoreau's graphite business, and he very likely did so to earn money to pay off what must have been his substantial debts to Thoreau, Emerson, and his other neighbors.[13] But Flannery's debt to Thoreau was, of course, more than money alone could repay, and this debt continued to mount. When Ann Flannery and her brood arrived from Ireland, the first house they went to was the Thoreaus' house on Main Street in Concord.[14] There is no record of how long the Flannerys boarded with the Thoreaus before Michael was able to find accommodations for them elsewhere.

Thoreau's journal of August 8, 1856, records the next incident in the Thoreau-Flannery relationship. Here Thoreau recounts the pursuit of his father's ninety-pound pig. This passage is very long, but it is so charming that I quote the relevant portion below. The pig had escaped from its pen, and the task of capturing the runaway fell to Thoreau. After several unsuccessful attempts to catch the errant beast, Thoreau writes that "an Irishman was engaged to assist." That Irishman was Michael Flannery:

> "I can catch him," says he, with Buonapartean confidence. He thinks him a family Irish pig. His wife is with him, bareheaded, and his little flibbertigibbet of a boy, seven years old. "Here, Johnny, do you run right off there" (at the broadest possible angle with his own course). "Oh, but he can't do anything." "Oh, but I only want him to tell me where he is,--to keep sight of him." Michael soon discovers that he is not an Irish pig, and his wife and Johnny's occupation are soon gone. Ten minutes afterward I am patiently tracking him step by step through a corn-field, a near-sighted man helping me, and then into garden after garden far eastward, and finally into the highway, at the graveyard; but hear and see nothing. One suggests a dog to track him. Father is meanwhile selling him to the blacksmith, who is also trying to get sight of him. After fifteen minutes since he disappeared eastward, I hear that he has been to the river twice far [to] the north, through the first neighbor's premises. I wend that way. He crosses the street far ahead, Michael behind; he dodges up an avenue. I stand in the gap there, Michael at the other end, and now he tries to corner him. But it is a vain hope to corner him in a yard. I see a carriage-manufactory door open. "Let him go in there, Flannery." For once the pig and I are of one mind; he bolts in, and the door is closed. Now for a rope. It is a large barn, crowded with carriages. The rope is at length obtained; the windows are barred with carriages lest he bolt through. He is resting quietly on his belly in the further corner, thinking unutterable things.
>
> Now the course commences within narrower limits. Bump, bump, bump he goes, against wheels and shafts. We

get no hold yet. He is all ear and eye. Small boys are sent under the carriages to drive him out. He froths at the mouth and deters them. At length he is stuck for an instant between the spokes of a wheel, and I am securely attached to his hind leg. He squeals deafeningly, and is silent. The rope is attached to a hind leg. The door is opened and the driving commences. Roll an egg as well. You may drag him, but you cannot drive him. But he is in the road, and now another thunder-shower greets us. I leave Michael with the rope in one hand and a switch in the other and go home. He seems to be gaining a little westward. But, after long delay, I look out and find that he makes but doubtful progress. A boy is made to face him with a stick, and it is only when the pig springs at him savagely that progress is made homeward. He will be killed before he is driven home. I get a wheelbarrow and go to the rescue. Michael is alarmed. The pig is rabid, snaps at him. We drag him across the barrow, hold him down, and so, at last, get him home.[15]

A little over a year after this event, Flannery is mentioned again in Thoreau's journal. This time, in an entry dated November 18, 1857, Thoreau writes:

> Flannery is the hardest-working man I know. Before sunrise and long after sunset he is taxing his unweariable muscles. The result is a singular cheerfulness. He is always in good spirits. He often overflows with his joy when you perceive no occasion for it. If only the gate sticks, some of it bubbles up and overflows in his passing comment on that accident. How much mere industry proves! There is a sparkle often in his passing remark, and his voice is really like that of a bird.[16]

There is little wonder that Flannery was so cheerful in Thoreau's presence, for however much Flannery's industry itself may have contributed to his cheerfulness, one suspects that his gratitude to Thoreau contributed a greater measure.

Michael Flannery seems never to have been able to repay all of the money he had borrowed from Thoreau. In his biography of Thoreau, Sanborn writes:

> When Sophia [Thoreau's sister] left Concord to live and die in Bangor, among her cousins, she gave me a small note of hand, which Flannery had signed for money lent him in some pinch, with instructions to receive payment if he was able to pay, but in any case to give him up the note, which I did.[17]

If you walk out Bedford Road from Concord, about a mile or so past Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, on the right will be St. Bernard's Cemetery. Walk fifteen yards or so into the first of the two entrances to the cemetery, and about twenty yards on your right will be the gravestones of Ann and Michael Flannery. The inscription on Ann's stone reads:

Erected by
MICHAEL FLANNERY,
in memory of his
beloved wife
ANN FLANNERY,
Died Oct. 31, 1883,
Aged 72 yrs.

May her soul rest in peace Amen

The inscription on Michael's reads simply:

MICHAEL FLANNERY
1800, 1900.

And if you look in the Concord telephone directory, you will see that the family which Thoreau helped to establish in the New World in the spring of 1854 has flourished. Under the name "Flannery" there are eleven listings.

Endnotes

1. Walter Harding, The Days of Henry Thoreau (1965; rpt. New York: Dover, 1982), p. 313.
2. Harding, Days, p. 313.
3. F. B. Sanborn, The Life of Henry David Thoreau (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1917), p. 434.
4. Townsend Scudder, Concord: American Town (Boston: Little, Brown, 1947), p. 216.
5. Harding, Days, p. 313. I very slightly alter my source based upon an examination of the manuscript draft of this petition in the Barrett Collection at the University of Virginia Library.
6. Henry D. Thoreau, The Journal of Henry D. Thoreau, ed. Bradford Torrey and Francis H. Allen (1906; rpt. New York: Dover, 1962), vol. 5, pp. 438-439.
7. Henry D. Thoreau, The Correspondence of Henry David Thoreau, ed. Walter Harding and Carl Bode (New York: Greenwood Press, 1958), p. 312.
8. Thoreau, Journal, vol. 6, p. 31.
9. See my unpublished Master's thesis, "The Sound of a Flail: Reconstructions of Thoreau's Early 'Life without Principle' Lectures" (Eastern Washington University, 1984), pp. 23-24, 141-142.

10. Thoreau, Correspondence, p. 294.
11. Thoreau, Journal, vol. 6, p. 158.
12. Walter Harding, "Thoreau in Emerson's Account Books," Thoreau Society Bulletin, 159 (Spring 1982), p. 3.
13. C. T. Ramsey, "A Pilgrimage to the Haunts of Thoreau," New England Magazine, 50 (November 1913), 383. During his pilgrimage to Concord, Ramsey spoke with one of Michael's sons, Patrick Flannery, who gave him this information.
14. Ramsey, "A Pilgrimage," 383.
15. Thoreau, Journal, vol. 8, pp. 454-456.
16. Thoreau, Journal, vol. 10, p. 187.
17. Sanborn, The Life of Henry David Thoreau, p. 435.

JOHN ALBEE AND THOREAU

by Joel Myerson

John Albee (1833-1915) is known today almost exclusively because of his writings on Ralph Waldo Emerson, most notably Remembrances of Emerson (1901). That book also contains an excellent description of Thoreau, one that Edward Waldo Emerson applauded, and one that can be used along with other of Albee's published and unpublished writings to follow his comments on Thoreau over half a century.

Remembrances of Emerson expands upon material Albee first published in 1882.[1] (In the text below, I have indicated substantive material first appearing in 1901 by enclosing it within asterisks.) Albee recalls a visit he made to Concord in May 1852, when he was a student at Andover Academy. Upon his arrival, he found Thoreau at the Emerson house:

> I think he had ended his experiment at Walden Pond some years before. Thoreau was dressed, I remember, in a plain, neat suit of dark clothes, not quite black. He had a healthy, out-of-door appearance, and *looked like a respectable husbandman.* He was rather silent; when he spoke, it was in either a critical or a witty vein. I did not know who or what he was; and I find in my old diary of the day that I spelled his rare name phonetically, and heard afterward that he was a man who had been a hermit. I observed that he was much at home with Emerson; and as he remained through the afternoon and evening, and I left him still at the fireside, he appeared to me to belong in some way to the household. I observed also that Emerson continually deferred to him and seemed to anticipate his view, preparing himself obviously for a quiet laugh at Thoreau's negative and biting criticisms, especially in regard to education and educational institutions. He was clearly fond of Thoreau; but whether in a human way, or as an amusement, I could not then make out. *Dear, indeed, as I have since learned, was Thoreau to that household; where his memory is kept green, where Emerson's children still speak of him as

their older brother. In the evening Thoreau devoted himself wholly to the children and the parching of corn by the open fire. I think he made himself very entertaining to them. Emerson was talking to me, and I was only conscious of Thoreau's presence as we are of those about us but not engaged with us. A very pretty picture remains in my memory of Thoreau leaning over the fire with a fair girl on either side,[2] which somehow did not comport with the subsequent story I heard of his being a hermit. Parched corn had for him a fascination beyond the prospect of something to eat. He says in one of his books that some dishes recommend themselves to our imaginations as well as palates. "In parched corn, for instance, there is a manifest sympathy between the bursting seed and the more perfect developments of vegetable life. It is a perfect flower with its petals, like the Houstonia or anemone. On my warm hearth these cerealian blossoms expanded."[3]

I never saw Thoreau again until I heard him in Boston Music Hall deliver his impassioned eulogy on John Brown. Meantime the "Week on the Concord and Merrimac [sic] Rivers" had become one of my favorite books; and I have atoned for my youthful and untimely want of recognition by bringing from my ocean beach a smooth pebble to his cairn at Walden. I gathered the stone in the ancient pharmaceutical manner, with the spell of one of Thoreau's songs:

> "My sole employment 'tis and scrupulous care
> To place my gains beyond the reach of tides;
> Each smoother pebble, and each shell more rare,
> Which ocean kindly to my hand confides."[4]

In the conversation of an afternoon and evening it is impossible to relate all that was said; one thinks he never shall forget a word of such a memorable day; but at length it becomes overlaid in the chambers of the memory and only reappears when uncalled for.* I find set down in my diary of the day two or three things which a thousand observers have remarked: that Emerson spoke in a mild, peculiar manner, justifying the text of Thoreau, that you must be calm before you can utter oracles . . .

As soon as I could I introduced the problem I came to propound--what course a young man must take to get the best kind of education. Emerson pleaded always for the college; said he himself entered at fourteen. This aroused the wrath of Thoreau, who would not allow any good to the college course. And here it seemed to me Emerson said things on purpose to draw Thoreau's fire and to amuse himself. When the curriculum at Cambridge was alluded to, and Emerson casually remarked that most of the branches were taught there, Thoreau seized one of his opportunities and replied: "Yes, indeed, all the branches and none of the roots." At this Emerson laughed heartily. So without conclusions, or more light than the assertions of two representative men can give, I heard agitated for an hour my momentous question.

. . . . . .

I was therefore somewhat confused in my notions regarding education by finding that Emerson, who as I then believed had made himself a great man, and was also college bred. Whether from desire to follow his example, or because I was already nearly prepared for college, I found myself involuntarily coinciding with Emerson's views rather than Thoreau's whimsical opinions. Yet Thoreau had been to college; but at some strange epoch in his life he had broken with his past and many of the traditions and conventions of his contemporaries. He had resolved to live according to Nature; and had the usual desire to publish the fact and explain the proceeding. It had never, however, the tone of apology; and it is our good fortune that he was not too singularly great to feel the need of communicating himself to his kind. Never has any writer so identified himself with Nature and so constantly used it as the symbol of his interior life. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish Thoreau from his companions, the woods, the woodchucks, and muskrats, the birds, the pond and the river. An inspired prescience foretold where to find the flower he wanted, and how to lure the little Musketaquid perch to his hand. Rare plants bloomed when he arrived at their secret hiding-places as if they had made an appointment with him; and the birds knew their lover's old cap and never mistook his telescope for a gun. In his intercourse with nature his pilot was some prophetic thought which led him by sure instinct to its sympathetic analogon in nature. It was natural, therefore, that to such a man systems of education should seem hindrances; they interposed another's will across the track of one's native intuitions. To shake off such substitutes with all their baggage was his prime intention.

. . . . . .

. . . [Emerson] said he needed some great poets, orators. He was always looking out for them, and was sure the new generation of young men would contain some. Thoreau here remarked he had found one, in the woods, but it had feathers and had not been to Harvard College. Still it had a voice and an aerial inclination, which was pretty much all that was needed. "Let us cage it," said Emerson. "That is just the way the world always spoils its poets," responded Thoreau. Then Thoreau, as usual, had the last word; *there was a laugh, in which for the first time he joined heartily, as the perquisite of the victor. Then we went in to tea in right good humor.*

After his graduation from Harvard Divinity School in 1858, Albee pursued his own literary career, writing a number of historical sketches about his native New Hampshire, as well as poetry and literary sketches. In 1880, he published a poem "At Thoreau's Cairn, Walden Woods, 1879," which shows his continued interest in Thoreau.[5]

When he began writing Remembrances of Emerson, Albee enlisted the help of his subject's son, Edward Waldo Emerson, and in recogni-

tion of that aid the book was dedicated to him. Edward took up Albee's book with enthusiasm and even tried to solicit reviews for him. In a letter to one possible reviewer, Edward wrote that "when he allowed me to read the manuscript three years ago both the matter and the manner gave me great pleasure," especially "the picture of our household in my childhood, when Mr. Thoreau was like an elder brother in the family, [which] seemed to me most admirable and characteristic. The way in which young men who came for guidance or sympathy were not only kindly received, but honoured is truly and well pictured here."[6] Twenty years later, after publishing his own Henry Thoreau as Remembered by a Young Friend (1917), Edward was still promoting the book. Writing to someone asking for advice on which books about Emerson to read, Edward recommended Albee's book by saying: "If you should come across a book written by one of the remote young men whose lives were turned and stirred by Mr. Emerson, it is worth reading for it is typical of what he did for many young men."[7]

Even the ubiquitous F. B. Sanborn "greatly liked" Albee's book, and he used the descriptions of Thoreau parching corn and Emerson caging poets in his own The Personality of Thoreau (1901).[8] Sanborn even sent his book to Albee in manuscript before publication, and Albee replied:

> It brought Thoreau nearer and more vivid than anything I have ever read about him,--the man, I mean, or, as you have more closely put it, his personality. Your life with him gives you a right to your knowledge, and I am thankful you have put it on record.
>
> . . . It is a comforting fact that Thoreau is increasing in fame,--has, it would appear, almost caught up with Emerson's splendid chariot. It is due (in part, at least I think so), to the present popular enthusiasm for Nature and nature-studies; also to his practical solution of the way to live in the world, and yet above it. . . . I think your book will set Thoreau on a higher pedestal than before,--especially in your proof of his uprightness in the common affairs of life.[9]

Sanborn apparently kept in touch with Albee, for when he published his edition of Ellery Channing's Thoreau: The Poet-Naturalist in 1903, Albee reviewed it, in what was probably his last major published comment on Thoreau:

> The new edition of Channing's "Life of Thoreau" has long been wanted. Copies of the first edition have been hard to find, and when found, beyond the purses of most admirers of Thoreau. Long ago I gave away my copy because it was too precious to keep all to myself. It went West as an apostle from the Concord board of transcendental missions, and I understand has been the means of grace to six unregenerate Hoosiers.
>
> If one were to inquire into the increasing interest in Thoreau, it would be found first in the man himself, in the now admitted fact that his life was lived on a higher plane than that of most men, with more abundant fruit. This fruit,

this high plane, is seen cleared of contemporary contempt and misunderstanding. It is now obvious he was a man of the strictest integrity, no idler, but most industrious, devoted to family and friends, minding his own business closely and continuously every day of his life. Besides he had a literary gift of expression, not merely literary, but the clothing of profound thought, and, therefore, abiding; and he was certainly the closest observer and the most poetic, philosophical reporter of what he saw of any ancient or modern writer.

This brings us to the second cause of Thoreau's popularity, namely, the universal enthusiasm for Nature studies. . . . Often you will be surprised into reading a moral or philosophical essay when you supposed you were to read about the habits of the crow. Thoreau was a master in this kind of mixture. Sometimes he looked a thing squarely in the face, and made a scientific observation or deduction; again it was a transient, passing glance only, and it was this which gave him a thought or led to some poetic conception. The Muse loves the oblique glance.

Every one now affects the love of Nature. One of the good consequences of this is the prevalent fondness for country life, and in the case of the especial admirers of Thoreau for plain living, retirement and devotion to some ideal.

. . . . . .

I once spent an afternoon and evening with Thoreau, but was too young to profit by the happy chance. However, I retain a vivid impression of his personality, his manner and some of his shrewd sayings, which I have embodied in my "Remembrances of Emerson." Although at that time he had published two books,[10] he had no apparent place in our literature. He died, alas, before he was known. . . . Yet for Thoreau one might wish that he could . . . be consoled and compensated for the neglect and contumely he suffered in his lifetime. Not that he seemed to care or be depressed by the want of literary success. He went right on observing, thinking, enjoying and recording everything in his many-volumed diary. There is no record of a more self-centered, industrious, contented and happy man in our annals than Thoreau. He did not condescend to live this mortal life with reservations against the next, and the postponement of his energies and enjoyments until he should become an angel. He held a good opinion of this world and of its opportunities; loved his mother earth--especially the Concord slice--and a few of his fellow-men. He was well content with his destiny and recognized as few men have the work given him to do. He constantly prepared himself for it and did it. His environment completely satisfied him. He thought he was born in the nick of time and in the very place he would have chosen. Well he might, who had for friends and companions Emerson, Channing, Hawthorne, Sanborn and Alcott. I fancy he would have himself included

the humble denizens of the Concord meadows, woods and waters. How fortunate, too, was he in having a great cause, the anti-slavery struggle, to engage himself in. Then I must add his vigorous health until the last year of his life, his happy home, his love of music. Though to the casual observer his career looked narrow and unprofitable, we at last know that few men have lived a larger spiritual and intellectual life. He has come to his own. Called an imitator of Emerson by the critics of his time, we have come to believe in his original genius. His writings, long neglected, cannot now be printed fast enough. His least interesting book is handsomely illustrated, and no modern essayist is content until he has exposed his views on Thoreau. To one who has lived long enough to have been a witness of all this, it brings a feeling of security that no sincere writing will be long neglected, no really great man forgotten.[11]

Endnotes

1. "Reminiscences of Emerson," New York Daily Tribune, July 23, 1882, p. 4; reprinted as "Reminiscence and Eulogy" in Concord Lectures on Philosophy, ed. Raymond L. Bridgeman (Cambridge: Moses King, 1883), pp. 66-69. The quotation below is from Remembrances of Emerson (New York: Robert G. Cooke, 1901), pp. 18-25, 31-32. The section on Thoreau also appears in the 1903 edition of Remembrances (New York: Robert Grier Cooke), pp. 27-36, 44-45.
2. Probably Emerson's daughters, Ellen and Edith.
3. A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers, ed. Carl F. Hovde et al. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 225.
4. This stanza from "The Fisher's Son" was first published in the "Wednesday" chapter of A Week (see Collected Poems of Henry Thoreau, enl. ed., ed. Carl Bode [Baltimore: Johns Hopkinds Press, 1964], p. 122).
5. Journal of Speculative Philosophy, 14 (July 1880), 338; reprinted in Concord Saunterer, 13, no. 3 (Fall 1978), 23-24.
6. Edward Waldo Emerson to Mr. Browne, May 18, [1901], Collection of Joel Myerson.
7. Edward Waldo Emerson to Frank C. Lockwood, April 25, 1921, Henry E. Huntington Library.
8. Sanborn to W. T. Harris, August 12, 1901, Abernethy Library, Middlebury College; (Boston: Charles E. Goodspeed), pp. 4-5.
9. Quoted in Sanborn to Harris, August 12, 1901. Harris had been at Andover with Albee. Sanborn obviously liked Albee's comments, for he also copied them in a letter of the same date to D. W. Wilder (Abernethy Library, Middlebury College).
10. Albee's memory is faulty: in 1852 only A Week had been published.
11. "Channing's Life of Thoreau," Springfield Republican, February 1, 1903. I am grateful to Thomas Blanding for providing me with many of the materials used in this article.

THOREAU'S CONCEPT OF THE WILD

by Rosalie Murphy Baum

In his brilliant chapter on Thoreau in Wilderness and the American Mind,[1] Roderick Nash suggests that Thoreau's trips to Maine in 1846, 1853, and 1857 significantly affected Thoreau's attitudes toward civilization and the wilderness.[2] Noting Thoreau's shock at the grimness and savagery of the Maine wilderness, Nash explains that the experience led to Thoreau's judgment that the "ideal man" occupied a "middling position, drawing on both the wild and the refined," that he combined in his life "the good inherent in wildness with the benefits of cultural refinement."[3]

However, Thoreau's trips probably did more to confirm his already realized position than to effect any change in his thinking. In fact, there is remarkable consistency in his attitude toward civilization and the wilderness in works which span three decades: in "A Winter Walk," published in 1843, several years before his first trip to Maine; Walden (1854); and "Walking" (1862). It becomes clear that he sees man as potentially experiencing nature in different ways and on different levels and that he has a well-defined concept of the most significant kind of relationship a man can establish with nature. His theory is more comprehensive and inclusive, in terms of human possibilities, than Emerson's.

For Emerson, the philosopher, nature is the reality or illusion through which a man discovers Nature (of which man is the conscious, reasoning part) or the Infinite (Oversoul). Through a close scrutiny of nature, through the establishment (re-establishment) of a harmony between man and nature, man can obtain a momentary insight into the organic wholeness of the universe, this insight occurring infrequently and being a glimpse of the Infinite. It is through man's sight primarily that he is able to attain spiritual awareness.

For Thoreau, nature is also a means through which man can glimpse the Infinite and discover (realize) the organic wholeness of the universe. But Thoreau is not concerned with the danger of confusing reality and illusion, and perhaps because he is the active rather than the metaphysical man, is more confident of man's ability to know. Thoreau--the practical man, the naturalist-philosopher, and the sensual man--examines the many relationships possible between man and nature and offers a kind of practical handbook for the man, like himself, who wishes, as in Walden, to hoe "a half-cultivated field,"[4] to combine and enjoy the domestic and wild in nature.

In Thoreau, man experiences nature through all of the senses--sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste--and on various levels. Man may instinctively and naturally turn to nature or he may consciously seek out nature, experiencing it on different levels.

In Walden, for example, Thoreau finds himself fascinated by a Canadian woodchopper and postmaker who is obviously in tune with the universe in a very natural, unconscious way. The woodchopper lives a quiet, solitary, and happy life, instinctively one with the universe, perhaps because "the animal man [in him] chiefly was developed" (W, II, 228), rather than the intellectual or spiritual. Thoreau suggests that the Canadian may indicate that there are "men of genius in the lowest grades of life, however permanently humble and illiterate" (W, II, 234).

Men who turn to nature for sport or occupation may also find themselves, in time, a natural part of nature. In Walden, Thoreau notes that the fishermen, hunters, and woodchoppers who, because of their occupations, spend "their lives in the fields and woods" are "in a peculiar sense a part of Nature themselves": They are frequently "in a more favorable mood for observing her, in the intervals of their pursuits, than philosophers or poets even, who approach her with expectation. She is not afraid to exhibit herself to them" (W, II, 328). He urges that young boys be allowed to hunt because, though they may begin as sportsmen, that is, though they may go into nature simply to shoot game, they may become "mighty hunters at last," such hunters that there is not "game large enough for them in this or any vegetable wilderness" (W, II, 330). In "A Winter Walk," Thoreau describes a pickerel-fisher filled "with dull, snowy, fishy thoughts,"[5] who has obviously been deeply affected by his contact with nature. The pickerel-fisher moves "deliberately and heavily, having sacrificed the sprightliness and vivacity of towns to the dumb sobriety of nature. He does not make the scenery less wild, more than the jays and musk-rats, but stands there as a part of it" (W, IX, 220). He speaks with "sincere deference and waving gesture" of "his primitive and ideal race of pickerel" and is "a worshiper of the unseen" (W, IX, 221), a man who is not always connected with the shore by a fishline.

The best example, of course, of the man who consciously sets out to establish a relationship with nature is Thoreau himself when he goes to Walden. Believing in the "unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor" (W, II, 142) and believing that man is "enabled to apprehend . . . what is sublime and noble only by the perpetual instilling and drenching of the reality that surrounds us" (W, II, 153), Thoreau sets out to eliminate the unnecessary accretions of civilization and, through immersion in nature, to awaken himself and, like Chanticlear, to awaken others who want "to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life" (W, II, 143). In his conscious contemplation at Walden, he makes the same distinction about nature that he makes in "A Winter Walk" and "Walking,"[6] the distinction between domestic (familiar) nature and wild (unexplored, unknown) nature. He also finds himself experiencing a oneness with the universe and insights on various levels--from the calm and contentment of harmony to the frenzy of desire.

In "A Winter Walk," Thoreau unlatches the door of his house on a familiar scene; he is in a settled area where one can hear farmers chopping wood, cocks crowing, house-dogs barking. But living in nature as he is, he must still take a winter walk because the nature which surrounds him is domesticated; nature cannot speak to him without embodying something of the wild (the new, the unknown). In his walk, the wild appears under four guises. Firstly, Thoreau walks at the "Approach of day," when even the domesticated animals' "twilight bustle is too solemn and mysterious for earth" (W, IX, 201). Secondly, he views a new scene, created out of the familiar by the recent winter storm, and experiences the apparent "fineness and purity" of nature, its "sturdy innocence" (W, IX, 204), the snow having successfully concealed decayed stumps and dead leaves, the wind and snow having cleansed the air. Thirdly, he notices the tracks of the "fox or otter, in the yard" and is reminded "that each hour of the night is crowded with events, and the primeval nature is still working and making tracks in the snow" (W, IX, 201). Finally, he wanders into a remote glade formed by a forest of pines, an area seldom seen and never explored, where the mice and rabbits wander at will, and wonders what human life would be without "forests, those natural cities" (W, IX, 207). As he looks up at the "pure elastic heaven [which] hangs over all," he experiences an insight into the relationship between winter and summer--"The winter is an arctic summer"--and comprehends "how much more living is the life that is in nature" (W, IX, 207). He realizes the "subterranean fire" (W, IX, 205) in nature--comparable to the "vital heat" in man--and reflects upon the effect that nature's simplicity and purity have on man's thoughts. His search for the wild has been successful: He has viewed familiar natural scenes under changed aspects; he has discovered unexplored natural areas; and through his encounter with nature he has experienced a heightened awareness of the life-pulse of nature, thereby stoking his own vital fire.

In Walden, Thoreau builds his house in a wilderness which becomes familiar, in the woods near a small pond. Most of his time is spent in contemplation, and his most prevalent mood is one of harmony with nature, a harmony interspersed with moments of quiet discovery or of special peace and contentment. Occasionally these moments of quiet delight transcend human limitations. In "Solitude," Thoreau describes such an experience: "This is a delicious evening, when the whole body is one sense, and imbibes delight through every pore. I go and come with a strange liberty in Nature, a part of herself" (W, II, 202). It is at times like this that Thoreau profoundly realizes the "sweet and beneficent society in Nature, in the very pattering of the [rain] drops, and in every sound and sight around my house, an infinite and unaccountable friendliness all at once like an atmosphere sustaining me" (W, II, 206-07). Such moments of insight in Walden--moments of "awakening or coming to life" (W, II, 209)--occur in both domesticated nature and the wild. Such insight can occur

even in the simple experience of eating berries on a hillside, a time when the "commonly gross sense of taste" (W, II, 339) feeds Thoreau's genius, provides a mental perception.

But, as in "A Winter Walk," the most stirring moments of spiritual realization for Thoreau occur in the wild: when (usually walking westward) he discovers unknown, unexplored areas of the woods, when the familiar becomes new to him because of the close scrutiny he gives it (for example, in "The Ponds"), or when the familiar becomes unfamiliar because of a change in the time of day (especially morning and night) or seasons of the year (especially winter and spring). In Walden (and later in "Walking"), Thoreau carefully explains this need for "the tonic of wildness":

> We require that all things be mysterious and unexplorable, that land and sea be infinitely wild, unsurveyed and unfathomed by us because unfathomable. We can never have enough of Nature. We must be refreshed by the sight of inexhaustible vigor, vast and Titanic features, the sea-coast with its wrecks, the wilderness with its living and its decaying trees, the thundercloud, and the rain which lasts three weeks and produces freshets. We need to witness our own limits transgressed, and some life pasturing freely where we never wander (W, II, 489-90).

And the two most dramatic epiphanies in Walden occur when Thoreau is most impressed by nature's "inexhaustible vigor" and man's limitations.

In the chapter "Higher Laws," Thoreau catches "a glimpse of a woodchuck stealing across my path" at night and is filled with "a strange thrill of savage delight" (W, II, 327). He himself becomes wildness. Filled with "a strange abandonment," he wishes to seize and devour the woodchuck, to ravish the very wildness of nature, physically to transcend his own human limitations. This physical crisis leads to the spiritual insights of the chapter: Thoreau recognizes the relationship between man's higher instincts and his animal nature and comes to the conclusion that "I love the wild not less than the good" (W, II, 327).

An insight of a more Emersonian type (and similar to that of "A Winter Walk") occurs in the chapter "Spring," in the "memorable crisis" (W, II, 481) when the Walden which was dead comes alive again, "like the creation of Cosmos out of Chaos and the realization of the Golden Age" (W, II, 483). Faced with the contrast between the "grotesque vegetation" (W, II, 470) of the inert bank, a vegetation carved in the sand, and the "Luxuriant foliage" of the bank on which the sun has already acted, Thoreau feels as though he stands in the "laboratory of the Artist who made the world and me" (W, II, 472). Confronted with the seasonal change, he is overwhelmed by the ever-burning subterranean fire of nature, the constant life of the "living earth" (W, II, 476). He sees Nature as constantly emerging and changing form in an organic universe: "The very globe continually transcends and translates itself, and becomes winged in its orbit" (W, II, 473). He sees Nature as the very "mother of humanity" (W, II, 475).

In "A Winter Walk, and Walden, Thoreau writes very personally: One shares his insights, experiences with him the situations and realizations he comes to. But in "Walking," Thoreau is more detached from his subject. His approach is more that of Emerson--defining, making distinctions, summarizing his own experiences, examining the petty and limited lives of civilized men, quietly, or sometimes passionately, arguing for the validity of his insights into the meaning of life. Only in the last five pages does something of the earlier Thoreau emerge; in these pages Thoreau recalls significant insights. He remembers, only after much effort, an "ancient and altogether admirable and shining family"[7] of woods settled on Spaulding's Farm. He describes the time he climbed a tall white pine tree and "found my account" (W, IX, 300). And in closing the essay he recalls a remarkable sunset of "so pure and bright a light" (W, IX, 303) that the reader is reminded of the holy light which shone on Walden in "Spring." Such a flood of sunlight in the natural scene symbolizes Thoreau's spiritual enlightenment.

But if "Walking" is not so valuable an essay for coming to understand the kind of insights a Transcendentalist may derive from nature, it is most helpful for developing ideas which appear in more germinal form in "A Winter Walk" and Walden. It is especially helpful in understanding Thoreau's distinction between the domestic and the wild.

Thoreau explains that most of his walking has been "between west and south-southwest" (W, IX, 266) and affirms what was suggested in the earlier works, that the West is another name for the Wild. He explains again how essential the wild is to man: "In Wildness is the preservation of the World" (W, IX, 275) because "The most alive is the wildest. Not yet subdued to man, its presence refreshes him" (W, IX, 277). And yet, in "A Winter Walk," Thoreau lives in a settled area and walks into the wild; in Walden, Thoreau is but a "sojourner" (W, II, 7, 61) in nature and walks in familiar scenes, in wild scenes, and even in the village. His bean field is only a "half-cultivated field," both domestic and wild. And in "Walking," he feels "that with regard to Nature I live a sort of border life" (W, IX, 296). Thoreau, then, obviously recognizes that man must live in society, in villages and towns, as well as in nature. But a man's (and a society's) intellectual and spiritual health depend upon the wild in nature: "A town is saved, not more by the righteous men in it than by the woods and swamps that surround it" (W, IX, 280). From such wildness come Homer and Confucius; because of such wildness exist such civilized nations as Greece, Rome, and England. The wildness of nature acts upon man and is reflected in the wildness of man, in "the uncivilized free and wild thinking" (W, IX, 283) of Hamlet and the Iliad, of the scriptures and mythologies. Wildness in man is genius, "a light which makes the darkness visible, like the lightning's flash, which perchance shatters the temple of knowledge itself" (W, IX, 283). The interaction of the wild in nature and the wild in man enables man to transcend simple knowledge, rend the veils of limitation, and experience a "Sympathy with Intelligence" (W, IX, 294). Such sympathy is the highest knowledge man can attain, even if it is nothing "more definite than a

novel and grand surprise on a sudden revelation of the insufficiency of all that we called Knowledge before--a discovery that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy. It is the lighting up of the mist by the sun" (W, IX, 294).

Wildness in nature is where "the strength, the marrow, of Nature" (W, IX, 280) is. It is the unfamiliar, the unexplored in nature; but it is also the unexplored in man, the discovery and exploration of which is made possible through contact with the wild in nature. It is the essence of life: vigor, strength, pulsating Life of an unfathomable depth because transcending life as man commonly experiences it. It reminds man constantly of his limits while impelling him to transcend them. The wild can be domesticated just as wild animals can be domesticated; but occasionally those wild animals will escape, proving that they have "not wholly lost their original wild habits and vigor" (W, IX, 287). Wildness (and the West) is both a reality and a metaphor for Thoreau. It is what Nature is to Emerson: that which is constantly changing, that which is a succession of present moments, that which makes it possible for man to transcend himself. Process, the very pulse of life.

Endnotes

1. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), pp. 84-95.
2. Other important studies of Thoreau's concept of the west and of wilderness are Sherman Paul's The Shores of America: Thoreau's Inward Exploration (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1958) and Edwin Fussel's Frontier: American Literature and the American West (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965).
3. Nash, p. 92.
4. In The Writings of Henry David Thoreau, ed. H. E. Scudder (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1893), II p. 246. Subsequent citations in the text.
5. In Excursions, Vol. IX of The Writings of Henry David Thoreau, ed. H. E. Scudder (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1893), p. 220. Subsequent citations in the text.
6. Thoreau walks in these essays, as in Walden, to seek the wild; his walking metaphor serves much the same function as Emerson's journey metaphor, although Emerson's journey more consistently spirals upward to higher plateaus.
7. In Excursions, p. 298. Subsequent citations in the text.

BEANS, BAKED AND HALF-BAKED (14) . . . . . Thomas Blanding

("I was determined to know beans." --Thoreau)

This field has long lain fallow. Can it be five years since I have sown here? Now there will be a fuller harvest than before, so rich the soil, so many the seeds.

Thoreau wrote Harrison Blake of Worcester on the last day of 1856, "I carried that [lecture] which I call 'Walking, or the Wild,'

to Amherst, N. H., the evening of that cold Thursday." That cold Thursday was December 18, when the thermometer at Concord at mid-day registered two degrees below zero as Thoreau boarded the train for his engagement. The snow deepened steadily beyond Littleton and the steam of the engine hugged the earth. At Nashua Thoreau hired a horse and sleigh and rode to Amherst, eleven miles, against a strong northwest wind. The bitter cold benumbed his driving hand and he tried to warm the other under the buffalo blanket. At South Merrimack he stopped to thaw himself in the shop of a tub and pail maker. Reaching Amherst, where the temperature had not gone above ten below all day, Thoreau delivered the second lecture of the Amherst lyceum season at 7:00 P.M., at ten cents a head. Afterward he wrote in his Journal:

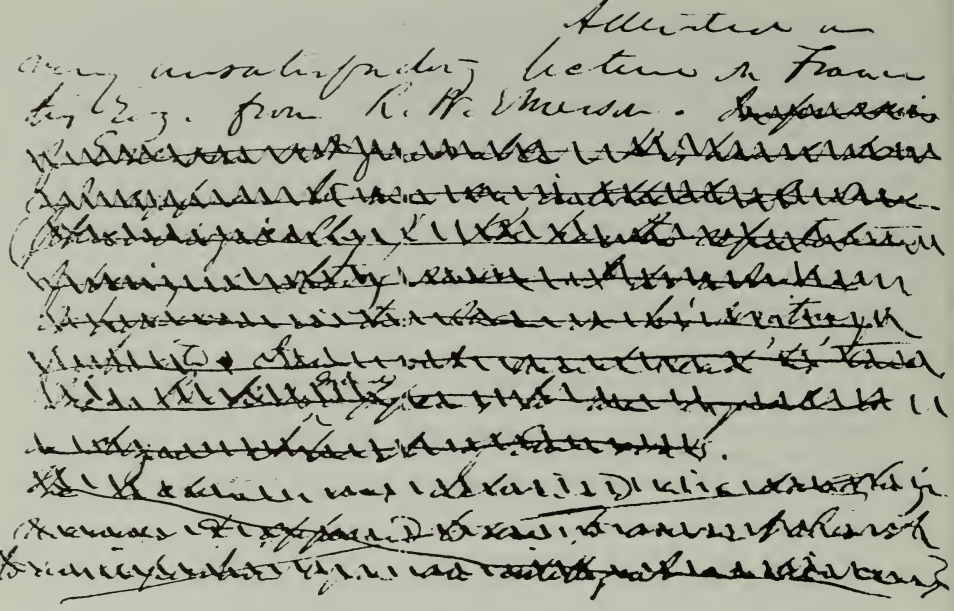
> At my lecture, the audience attended to me closely, and I was satisfied; that is all I ask or expect generally. Not one spoke to me afterward, nor needed they. I have no doubt that they liked it, in the main, though few of them would have dared say so, provided they were conscious of it. Generally, if I can only get the ears of an audience, I do not care whether they say they like my lecture or not. I think I know as well as they can tell. At any rate, it is none of my business, and it would be impertinent for me to inquire. The stupidity of most of these country towns, not to include the cities, is in its innocence infantile. Lectured in the basement (vestry) of the orthodox church, and I trust helped to undermine it.

Thoreau ended his entry for December 18, "A paper called the Farmer's Cabinet is published there. It has reached its fifty-fifth volume." If he looked in the latest issue, dated the day of his arrival, he would have read:

> AMHERST LYCEUM!
> Lecture Dec 18th, by HENRY D. THOREAU, Esq., of Concord, Mass--SUBJECT, "Getting a Living."

Wittingly or not, Thoreau carried the wrong lecture to Amherst. It may be just as well. If that one he called "Walking, or the Wild" helped to undermine the orthodox church, that one the Farmers' Cabinet called "Getting a Living"--later called "Life without Principle"--could have collapsed it.

Among the Daniel Ricketson manuscripts and memorabilia Ray Parmenter has lent to the Thoreau Society Archives is the diary Ricketson kept from 1847 to 1854. Unfortunately, it ends only months before Ricketson meets Thoreau and enters the celebrated Concord circle. Near the end of the notebook, however, an entry for March 21, 1854, presages that encounter. Unfortunately again, the passage has been deleted with dark ink:



The uncanceled first sentence--"Attended a very unsatisfactory lecture on France this Evg. from R. W. Emerson"--suggests that Ricketson went on to say some unflattering things about Emerson's lecture at New Bedford. Ricketson must have denied posterity his opinion when he later became a worshipful admirer of the

Dear, amiable man, of soul sublime.

But posterity will pry until it has its past. An eye-straining scrutiny beneath the blots reveals:

> Attended a very unsatisfactory lecture on France this Ev[enin]g. from R. W. Emerson. Impression of Emerson not favorable-- His head does not appear to me an intellectual one (phrenologically)[.] He has the reputation of being a strong man. I do not see it however in the man or his writings of which I am not much read 'tis true. Theo[dore]. Parker's mind appears to me equal to a dozen at least of Emerson's.
>
> The Lecture was delivered in a dawdling manner & appeared to me to amount almost to an imposition upon an intelligent audience.

Part of Ricketson's criticism may be to the point. Emerson read his lecture on "France" again on April 5 before the Concord Lyceum. A few days later Henry Thoreau wrote in his Journal:

At the Lyceum the other night I felt that the lecturer had chosen a theme too foreign to himself and so failed to interest me as much as formerly. He described things not in or near to his heart, but toward his extremities and superficies. The poet deals with his privatest experience. There was no central nor centralizing thought in the lecture.

With the kind permission of the Boston Public Library we print part of a letter (Ms.A.9.15 p. 67) from Anne Warren Weston at Concord to her cousin Deborah Weston in Weymouth, Massachusetts, which sheds light on the activities of Concord's Women's Anti-Slavery Society in 1841. Miss Weston was scouting the towns of Middlesex County on behalf of her sister Maria Chapman, the beacon of the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society, to quicken support for the local Anti-Slavery Fairs which raised money for their cause. Miss Weston stayed in Concord at the home of Mary Merrick Brooks, president of the Women's Anti-Slavery Society, wife of a prominent lawyer, Nathan Brooks, and like the Weston sisters a staunch supporter of William Lloyd Garrison. Next door to the Brookses lived the Thoreaus in a nest of antislavery activity. Mrs. Thoreau, her daughters Helen and Sophia, her sister Louisa Dunbar and sisters-in-law Jane and Maria Thoreau, and boarders Mrs. Joseph Ward and Mrs. Ward's daughter Prudence were all members of the Women's Anti-Slavery Society and close friends of Mrs. Brooks. Anne Weston's letter describes Jane and Maria Thoreau as "new orgs" in the antislavery cause. The "New Orgs" were supporters of a new organization, the American and Foreign Antislavery Society, which had split from Garrison's American Antislavery Society in 1840 under the leadership of Lewis Tappan. Where the Garrisonians stressed noncooperation with pro-slavery governments and churches as the best way to free the slaves, the Tappanites, the larger, more orthodox wing of the nonresistance antislavery movement, encouraged political action and denounced Garrisonian tactics as a threat to social order.

Concord. Sept 16. 1841.

Thursday morning.

Dear Deborah,

. . . [Monday was a pouring rain] so I waited till Tuesday afternoon [to leave Groton] for no stage goes through Concord till afternoon. . . . I met the kindest of welcomes from Mrs Brooks, who had been on the qui vive for me several days. I had been at the house before for a call, so knew where I was to be put down. She lives in a nice comfortable though old & old fashioned house. The family consists of herself, husband and a little boy 8 or 9 yrs old, a nephew of Mr Brooks. She has no help, but a woman who lives just at her door in a sort of building that was once

an appendage to the Brooks house does her washing & ironing & will come in to help her whenever she stands in need of help. Mr Brooks is a pleasant looking and highly gentlemanly man. He is, I think considerably older than herself and as far as such a woman as Mrs B can stand in that relation to a man, she is his petkin. You only need to hear him say what "Mary thinks" to know the very loving terms on which they stand to each other. He received me very kindly "was particularly glad I had come just now to be with Mary as he had to attend a Court at Lowell and he now should not have to leave her alone." As for Mrs Brooks, I like her more & more & I never saw a woman more truly independent & conscientious. She is very lively and very good tempered, & perfectly fearless--what the transcendentalists might hail as "the truest of women"-- She has but one want: she is no further literary than a thorough knowledge of every thing connected with Anti Slavery or Non Resistance makes her so and as she is so companionable in every thing else, I miss this knowledge of books. We spent the first evening abusing ministers and telling our own experiences. Mr B. came in from his office about 9 & talked over the cause, non Resistance etc for about an hour. He is a little too slow & prosy and is as good an Abolitionist as his social standing will permit. Wednesday he left for Lowell, to be gone a day or two. We had several calls, Mrs & Miss Hoar & the Misses Thoreau, the first women very weak abolitionists of the old school, the second new orgs. I took them all for worldlings & when the Thoreaus politely introduced Anti Slavery, so it happened that I in the most innocent manner gave some dabs at New. Org. which greatly pleased Mrs B. In the afternoon Mrs Brooks sent to the Hotel for a chaise & she & I started for Acton. . . . [We] got back between 7 & 8. A Mrs Thoreau called & said her daughter had called in the afternoon to see me to say that Miss Elizabeth Hoar was going to have a few friends & wanted me to pass the evening with her, but as we were gone & the door locked Miss Helen Thoreau went off without accomplishing her mission, and when I heard the message, of course it was too late. This morning Miss Hoar called & another lady who is visiting her. She is a rather pretty though very frail person, not young, that is 8 or 9 & 20. She is very gentle in her manners and still wears deep mourning for Charles Emerson, which she will probably never lay aside. The call was decidely on me, so I suppose I shall call there before leaving town. I did not mean to stay but a day here, but I find things so agreeable, I shall stay till tomorrow afternoon. . . . There is no prospect for the

Fair, either in Groton or Acton. . . . I have not ascertained how it is in Concord but if any thing can be done rest assured Mrs B. will do it. I am going to call on the Alcotts.

Yrs ever

A W W

What Concord character could be more memorable than Maria Thoreau, Henry's spirited, outspoken maiden aunt? She is the "veiled lady" who paid her nephew's tax to spring him from jail, the unveiled Trinitarian forever trying to convert him to orthodoxy. Mabel Loomis Todd remembered Maria vividly:

> Aunt Maria was a sharp and brilliant soul, a great talker, with very decided opinions upon religion, politics and the world in general. She was little, brisk and energetic, and most firmly entrenched in her own opinions and principles. Sometimes wise, and frequently noble, they were often only firm prejudices. She wore a wig of an early style, bright brown, smoothly parted and brought down on each side of her face under the margin of gay ribbon beneath an elaborate cap of blonde lace, surmounted by loops and bows of purple or lavender ribbon. The cap was tied under her determined chin where two full sets of articifial teeth combined in making her strong expression even more firmly fixed.

We are familiar with the visage. Maria's photograph, posed three-quarter face, has been reproduced often. (See "Rapping with the Thoreaus," Concord Saunterer, vol. 17, no. 1 [March 1984], 1.) We here reproduce from a print in the Abernethy Library, Middlebury College, a new photograph of Maria, full face, taken during the same sitting as the familiar likeness introduced by F. B. Sanborn in The Life of Henry David Thoreau in 1917. Maria wrote her friend Prudence Ward on February 23, 1864, about the photographs of herself and her sister Jane recently taken in Boston (Thoreau Society Archives, typescript of manuscript now lost):

> I am not well yet, but I want to drop you a line to send you my photograph which you so earnestly requested. The week before I was taken sick we had them taken. Jane's I think is excellent and mine is pretty good only looking rather sadder than my wont, but I will leave you to judge about them. Jane sends hers to Caroline [Ward Sewall]. I wish we could send each of you one of each, but we had but few taken, as the price within three months for Photographs is doubled, and we could not afford any more. They were taken at Southworth's and I should like to have set again as I am not quite satisfied with mine.

MARIA THOREAU

Winter 1863-64

(Courtesy of the Abernethy Library, Middlebury College)